

Evaluating the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields Facilitation Pilot Projects

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Brownfields are defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as “a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse¹.” There are between 130,000 and 425,000 brownfields sites across this country. These sites pose particular difficulties in redevelopment, difficulties that often require cooperative action on the part a wide range of stakeholders and community leaders. In this regard, collaborative processes may well promote more effective decision making for brownfield redevelopment. This report examines the impact of facilitation and facilitated collaborative decision making on brownfields assessment and redevelopment initiatives. More specifically, it examines efforts by the US Environmental Protection Agency to actively promote the use of facilitation in communities with difficult to resolve issues that block brownfields redevelopment as compared to communities that internally identify the need for and seek out facilitator support for their redevelopment efforts.

I. Project Background

A. Brownfields Redevelopment

Long considered urban (as well as rural and tribal) wastelands, brownfields are increasingly seen as potential economic resources. Where developable land is scarce, markets may provide the resources needed to rehabilitate existing brownfields. For many brownfields, however, the cost and complexity of cleanup efforts make redevelopment difficult. In particular, when brownfields are located in low income neighborhoods, developers usually opt for “greenfields” development instead of brownfields redevelopment. Consequently, the economy of the abandoned community suffers as jobs and tax bases are lost. Equally important, the environments surrounding both the brownfields and the greenfields sites suffer as old industrial sites remain contaminated and new, virgin lands are unnecessarily developed.

In 1995, the Environmental Protection Agency announced its Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative. The Agency recognized that many areas across the country once used for industrial and commercial purposes had been abandoned, and that lenders, investors, and developers feared that involvement with these sites might make them liable for cleaning up contamination they did not create. EPA developed a grants program to assess the contamination at selected sites while offering certain liability relief. EPA also developed an inspired definition of brownfields as, “sites which have actual or *perceived* contamination and possess an active potential for redevelopment or reuse.” (italics added). The notion of contamination as *perceived*, while rarely found in other EPA programs such as Superfund, addresses the fear of contamination and liability associated with these properties, a fear which distinctly alters the potential for redevelopment of brownfields.

¹Environmental Protection Agency, “Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative”, EPA 500-F-00-241, October, 2000. <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

To date, EPA has awarded \$200,000 to 362 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot projects to states, tribes, municipalities, and communities. The grants are provided to help jurisdictions assess possible contamination and to plan for reuse. These grants, however, only begin to address the problem. The Government Accounting Office estimates that between 130,000 and 425,000 brownfields sites exist, and that these sites are blighted, unsafe, pose health risks for residents, drive up unemployment and foster a sense of hopelessness.²

The redevelopment of potentially contaminated properties, particularly properties located in lower-income communities, faces many obstacles, particularly when the cost of cleanup potentially exceeds the market value of the decontaminated land. Not surprisingly, successful brownfield redevelopment requires coordinated strategies to overcome the complexity of these efforts. Properties that are potentially contaminated must be physically assessed to determine the likelihood and level of such contamination. Owners often avoid conducting assessments both because of the cost of the assessment and potential regulatory actions to clean up the site act if contaminants are identified. In the absence of such an assessment, potential buyers remain uncertain as to potential costs of site preparation or building reuse. These disincentives discourage further exploration of the site. These risks also reduce the likelihood of lenders investing in redevelopment efforts. Neighbors and community leaders, who may very much want the site redeveloped, are often also concerned with the potential community impacts of the redevelopment efforts themselves. City officials, who often seek to promote redevelopment of brownfields, are frequently distracted by a host of more immediate problems needing attention. Moreover, the conditions found in communities facing other impediments to redevelopment (such as low incomes, low property values, adjacency to other environmental threats, and a history of segregation), further militate against effective community collaboration. Community pessimism concerning the possibility for significant change combines with developer apathy about potential redevelopment opportunities, uncoordinated governmental efforts and conflict avoidance to produce few improvements.

Thus, while many individuals might benefit from redevelopment efforts, each faces disincentives to action and the potential for conflict with other stakeholders should redevelopment efforts be initiated. Each also lacks the resources to initiate and conduct the redevelopment by themselves. Political and bureaucratic inertia reinforces the market's tendency to by-pass redevelopment of brownfield sites.

In this light, studies have shown that “one of the biggest—and unexpected—challenges facing advocates of brownfields reuse is building coalitions and fostering meaningful relationships among stakeholders.”³ Issues identified by this and other studies⁴

²Government Accounting Office, “Community Development: Re-use of Urban Industrial Sites, GAO/RCEO-95-172, 1995. <http://www.access.gpo.gov>

³ International City/County Management Association, Superfund/Brownfield Research Institute, Brownfields Blueprints A Study of the Showcase Communities Initiative (Washington DC: ICMA, June 2001; page 2).

⁴ See Charles Bartsch (edited by Barbara Wells), Community Involvement in Brownfield Redevelopment, (Northeast-Midwest Institute, March 2003); The International City/County Management Association. Brownfields Redevelopment: A Guidebook for Local Government and Communities, 2nd Edition. (Washington

that affected a wide range of stakeholders and government officials included coordination amongst intragovernmental and intergovernmental agencies and organizations; maintaining focus through consistency in staff; identifying and packaging the resources needed for redevelopment; increasing and focusing private sector, community and non-governmental stakeholder involvement; and managing stakeholder expectations.

By extension, successful redevelopment often grows from collaborative partnerships. Brownfields redevelopment usually requires that a wide range of stakeholders work together to design and implement cleanup efforts. Yet stakeholders come from widely differing backgrounds and perspectives, including national, state, tribal and local governments, real estate companies, economic development organizations, commercial businesses, environmental organizations, community-based interests groups, nearby residents, and others. While these groups may share many common goals, their interests differ significantly. Working through these differences often creates conflict. For many brownfields sites, this conflict, whether latent or active, precludes the multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation needed. Building effective collaborative partnerships, while often essential to the success of brownfield redevelopment efforts, poses significant difficulties in practice.

B. EPA's Efforts to Promote Facilitation and Consensus Building

Under these conditions, a consensus building professional can often provide needed services and support. Conflict management theory and practice suggests that third-party neutrals may fulfill three fundamental functions needed in brownfields redevelopment: *convening* (initiating and designing an appropriate negotiation or consensus building process), *facilitation* (impartially managing meetings to enable participants to focus on substantive issues and goals), and *mediation* (intervening into the process dynamics of a negotiation or dispute to help resolve differences).⁵ Such professional assistance may help stakeholders clarify their common interests and work through their differences more productively.

On May 13, 1997 the Clinton Administration announced the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Brownfields National Partnership Action Agenda.⁶ Included in the Action Agenda was the nascent idea that Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) could be used to expedite the cleanup and sustainable reuse of brownfields properties even though ADR had not been included as an action item in the initial Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative. Until this time, EPA had used ADR primarily in policy dialogues,

DC: ICMA, 2001); The International City/County Management Association. Local Government and Community Engagement in Brownfields Redevelopment (Washington DC: ICMA, 2003); Pepper, Edith. Lessons from the Field: Unlocking Economic Potential with an Environmental Key. The Northeast-Midwest Institute, Washington, 1997; and EPA's website at <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>.

⁵Michael L. Poirier Elliott, "The Role of Facilitators, Mediators, and Other Consensus Building Practitioners" in *The Consensus Building Handbook*, Lawrence Susskind, Sarah McKernan and Jennifer Thomas-Larmer, eds. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999, pp. 199-239).

⁶Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Brownfields National Partnership Action Agenda, 1997. <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/97aa.htm>

regulatory negotiations and in the Superfund enforcement program. In 1997, however, EPA had come to realize that some enforcement cases might beneficially incorporate community involvement components, notably in remedy selection and land use decisions.⁷ In cases where community input was crucial to good decision making, EPA began to explore the potential use of more facilitative forms of mediation than had been used in Superfund allocations disputes and regulatory negotiations. EPA wished to determine if a facilitative mediation model might benefit Brownfields Assessment Pilots, since community input was not only desired in the decision making process, but required.

Of the 362 projects included in EPA's Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, approximately thirteen percent (41 projects) incorporated an "impartial" convenor, facilitator or mediator.⁸ While primarily located in industrial urban areas, some were in small towns, rural areas or on tribal lands. Some were also closely linked, or co-located, with Superfund sites.

The interventions vary widely. Services provided include convening, mentoring, coaching and training, planning and implementing multi-stakeholder meetings, as well as direct support of negotiations among stakeholders. Moreover, while some interventions have been short-term (covering a span of a few days), others have been as long as three to four years. In some cases, the facilitators were involved at the beginning of a project, in its convening stages. In other cases, facilitators were engaged only after difficulties were encountered, some as much as two years into the life of the project. Given this range of uses, and for a much-needed simplicity of language, we will call these interventions *facilitations* throughout the remainder of the report⁹.

C. Nationally Supported and Locally Supported Facilitations

These 41 facilitated brownfields pilots can be divided into two groups. In approximately two-thirds of these pilots (28 projects), facilitation was initiated by Brownfields Assessment Pilot participants, as a result of locally perceived needs. In these projects, community leaders (at times working with regional EPA brownfields coordinators) identified the need for a third-party intervener, and raised the money to hire that person. We designate these pilots "locally initiated facilitations."

In the remaining one-third (13 projects), the facilitation services were obtained with the direct support and encouragement of the Office of Site Remediation and Enforcement's Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, located in EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (now reorganized into EPA's Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center). Working within the context of the Brownfields Assessment Pilots, this EPA

⁷Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1, Elissa Tonkin, ADR Specialist.
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/steward/adr/index.html>

⁸Based on interviews conducted by evaluation team.

⁹While we recognize that the term "facilitation" may appear to be more simplistic than explanatory, this term is what EPA enforcement management deemed appropriate and preferable to the more descriptive, if unwieldy term, facilitated consensual decision making.

Headquarters office established an experimental program designed to investigate and/or enhance facilitated consensual decision making within brownfields redevelopments projects. The 13 sites selected for this program received facilitation supports paid for directly by the Office of Site Remediation Enforcement. We designate these pilots “nationally supported facilitations.”

D. Nationally Supported Facilitations

In 1998, the EPA ADR staff contacted the brownfields program in each of EPA’s ten regions to explore potential applications of ADR to Assessment Pilots. While many Assessment Pilots were progressing well and a handful was being facilitated through local initiatives, a number of the pilots (about 20%) were “stalled.” Through conversations with Regional Brownfields Coordinators, EPA Headquarters ADR staff identified what appeared to be some common barriers facing the Assessment Pilots. These barriers included:

- inadequate and/or belated participant identification, especially of community members-at-large;
- environmental justice issues not addressed early enough in the process;
- poor communication among participants;
- inappropriate expectations by participants;
- erratic or changing participation;
- loss of momentum;
- uncertain or incomplete scientific information;
- complex timelines which needed coordination and documentation;
- complex statutory and/or regulatory issues;
- federal, state, and local jurisdictional complexities; and
- difficult people and personalities.

Based on these barriers, EPA designed a Brownfields Facilitation Pilot Program that sought to promote the use of facilitation as a decision making vehicle for working through these barriers. EPA Headquarters ADR staff requested Facilitation Pilot nominations¹⁰ from regional Brownfields program staff. Headquarters also allocated money for the pilot program, established a contract mechanism to obtain facilitative support (including process facilitators and mediators), and created criteria for selection.

EPA ADR staff first screened each of the potential pilots, seeking to ensure that the EPA Brownfields contact/coordinator agreed to use facilitated mediation at a nominated Assessment Pilot site and the EPA Brownfields contact/coordinator understood the ways facilitated mediation might be used. The Brownfields Assessment Pilot participant at the

¹⁰Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Site Remediation Enforcement. Memorandum: The Use of Facilitation at Selected Brownfields Sites, Lee Scharf, August, 1998.

Pilot site (and often others identified by the contact) and the Regional EPA Brownfields Coordinator then participated in a “convening” teleconference call with the ADR staff managing the Facilitation Project. Following the convening calls, the ADR staff in EPA’s headquarters chose nine initial Assessment Pilots to be part of the Facilitation Project, using the following criteria:

- The issues were appropriate for facilitation/mediation;
- The facilitation projects were geographically spread, and included a combination of urban and rural sites;
- Projects with environmental justice and Tribal issues, or other capacity-building concerns, were given particular attention; and
- When possible, facilitator/mediators could be identified in close geographical proximity to the project.

In most cases, facilitators were selected in consultation with the Brownfields Coordinators and the Pilot participants. Some facilitators were suggested by EPA Headquarter ADR staff because they were geographically close to pilot sites and were pre-approved on the contract roster, while others were suggested by pilot participants. A total of twelve pilot projects were completed.

II. Evaluation Protocols

A. Overview and Rationale

EPA’s Office of Site Remediation and Enforcement’s Alternative Dispute Resolution Program initiated this evaluation of brownfields facilitations. The evaluation assesses whether, and under what conditions, facilitation improved the decision making processes associated with the 12 nationally supported facilitations. In addition, the evaluation similarly examines 12 locally initiated facilitations.

From preliminary assessments conducted as part of this evaluation, the research team identified 28 projects (in addition to the 12 nationally supported projects) where local participants organized to hire a facilitator. The dynamics that affected these projects varied considerably from the 12 nationally supported projects. Locally initiated projects incorporated a wider range of facilitations, had stronger local support, and seemed to have led to more substantial outcomes. These differences stem in part from the design of the nationally supported program and in part from the incentives presented to local communities. The national facilitation program was initiated a number of years after the start of the first Brownfield Pilots and therefore has a shorter history. In addition, this program provided assistance primarily to projects that were already stalled. As a consequence, locally initiated facilitations appear to be more centrally integrated into the decision making process. Facilitators were hired to help solve specific problems or to manage specific processes rather than to provide general support to a stalled process.

The evaluation of the 12 nationally-initiated facilitations provides for a systematic assessment of the cost and benefits associated with EPA-funded facilitated brownfields

projects, as well as barriers and opportunities for more effective use of these techniques. By examining 12 locally-initiated facilitations, the evaluation was strengthened in three important ways. First, study of these additional cases helped clarify the impact of federally initiated Brownfields initiatives by providing comparison cases from outside the program. Second, this expanded sample allowed more effective assessment of the impact of facilitation on consensus building in brownfields by examining efforts emanating from locally initiated consensus building efforts. Third, the additional cases increased the universe of projects and the conditions under which facilitation has been used.

B. The Purpose of the Evaluation

To date, few facilitated, consensus-oriented, environmental collaborative problem solving processes have been evaluated. Most evaluations have focused on individual, unique cases. Very few evaluations have sought to understand the role of facilitation in reconciling interests associated with a system of disputes.

Brownfields disputes represent a unique opportunity to do so. The numerous brownfields pilots being funded by EPA provide an excellent “laboratory” for conducting this evaluation. They represent a system of disputing that occurs within a context of shared regulatory, economic and political dynamics. Yet they occur in localities across the United States and are therefore subject to unique local pressures. This project therefore fills a vital need to assess the value and role of facilitated decision making as a tool for dispute management systems associated with brownfields redevelopment. This takes on particular importance in light of the Bush Administration’s emphasis on brownfields redevelopment.¹¹

The evaluation sought to assess impact of facilitated brownfields consensus building efforts, as well as barriers and opportunities for more effective use of these techniques. More specifically, the evaluation sought to:

- explore the process of decision making and consensus building in brownfields redevelopment;
- examine the impacts on brownfields redevelopment emerging from these efforts;
- assess the contextual, procedural, and substantive variables that contribute to effective brownfields consensus building;
- clarify barriers to effective decision-making in brownfields redevelopment projects;
- recommend improvements in consensus building process design and management;
- document effective uses of facilitators in brownfields redevelopment projects; and
- clarify “best practices” used by facilitators in these projects.

¹¹ In her “Welcome to EPA Employees” speech, Christine Todd Whitman emphasized the high priority of brownfields redevelopment to the Bush Administration. Brownfields was the only specific substantive concern of hers to be published on EPA’s official web site at http://www.epa.gov/epahome/speeches_020801.htm.

The evaluation results should be of value to the US EPA in assessing the value and role of facilitation in brownfields, as well as to better understand how facilitation and broad community support might be useful in promoting community-based environmental management. The results of this evaluation will also be of assistance to states, tribes and local governments and the various stakeholders involved in brownfields projects. The information should help sponsors of brownfields projects evaluate the best ways to proceed in initiating a project, how best to utilize a facilitator and what to expect from a multi-stakeholder process. Stakeholders will benefit from gaining a clearer understanding of these processes and how they can most effectively participate in brownfields projects.

C. Variables Addressed by the Evaluation

The design of this evaluation incorporates and addresses several variables. These include:

1. Outcomes
 - the degree to which significant and unique outcomes emerged from the process;
 - the degree to which brownfields are assessed and, if appropriate, redeveloped; and
 - evidence of improvements in environmental quality as a result of the consensus building process.
2. Capacity Building and Relationships
 - extent that public and private resources contributed to planning and implementation;
 - effectiveness of participants to organize themselves to resolve conflict and implement programs;
 - efficiency of coordination;
 - continuity of participation; and
 - follow through on commitments.
3. Process
 - extent of public involvement in the process and the impact of the number and type of stakeholders involved;
 - participant views of the efficiency and effectiveness of the collaborative decision making process;
 - capacity of the process to effectively involve the various stakeholders, in ways that all parties consider just;
 - the effects of different roles and approaches taken by facilitators or mediators;
 - the impact of process design, resource availability and facilitator selection process on the success of the process; and
 - the extent and stability of consensus.

4. Substantive Issues

- management of technical and scientific information; and
- delineation and management of substantive issues.

D. Selection of Cases

Cases selected for evaluation include all 12 of the nationally supported facilitations. Their inclusion in the evaluation stems from their selection by EPA Headquarters as part of the National Facilitation Pilot effort.

Locally initiated facilitations were identified by investigating the use of facilitation in Brownfields Assessment Pilots around the country. This included research in EPA data bases, direct interviews of Brownfields Coordinators in each EPA regional office, and contacts with academic institutions and government consultants.

In each of these cases, either local Brownfields project coordinators or EPA regional coordinators actively involved in the project recognized the potential value in using a facilitator. The processes employed ranged from one time, half-day meetings to fully facilitated processes lasting the course of a project (three to four years). In each case, there was an intentional, well-defined purpose and set of expectations associated with engaging a facilitator. In these cases, sufficient value was placed on facilitation to warrant finding or allocating the funds necessary to employ a facilitator.

Twelve of the 28 locally initiated facilitations were selected for inclusion into the Phase II study. By selecting 12 cases, we are able to match the number of nationally sponsored facilitations, thereby providing similar levels of detail to both components of the evaluation. This number of cases also provided us with a good, representative sample of the 28 locally initiated facilitations. Cases were selected to represent the full range of techniques employed in the 28 facilitations and to mimic the geographic diversity found in the 12 nationally sponsored facilitations.

III. Characteristics of the Facilitated Brownfield Projects

This evaluation, then, examines the facilitation process of 24 brownfield projects, 12 of which were federally initiated as part of the Brownfields Pilot Program and 12 of which were locally initiated. A summary overview of each project is shown in Tables 1 and 2, with Table 1 presenting projects that were federally initiated as part of the Brownfield Facilitation Pilot Program, and Table 2 presenting projects that were locally initiated. The tables indicate the location of the project, the collaborative processes used, the timing of the facilitation process, the roles played by the facilitator, the impact of the facilitation, a few major characteristics of each project, and the research technique used to assess each project.

Details of the five detailed case studies are presented in Appendices A through E. Details of the 19 telephone studies are presented in Appendices F and G.

Table 1: Federally Initiated Facilitation Projects, Brownfield Facilitation Pilot Program

Location of Project			Collaborative Processes Used					Timing of Facilitation Process	Role of Facilitator						Impact of Facilitation	Major Characteristics	Research Technique
City, State	EPA Region	Rural or Urban	No Formal Participation Process	Charrette / Short-Term Workshop	Inter-Agency Negotiations	Work /Advisory Group	Stakeholder Collaborative Process		Process Advisor/Assessor	Process Designer	Trainer/Coach/Educator	Process Initiator	Outreach / Informal Negotiations	Meeting Manager/Mediator			
New Bedford, MA	1	U					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑	↑				+	Lack of agency staff continuity; focus on capacity building	
Lowell, MA	1	U		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑		↑		↑	++ +	Complexity of issues and process; need for intergovernmental coordination; multiple facilitators	→
Hudson County, NJ	2	U	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						↑						0	Limited participation; lack of clarity of facilitator roles	
Shenandoah, VA	3	R		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑	↑	↑		↑	++ +	Need for intergovernmental coordination; focus on capacity building; long term involvement of facilitators	→
Milwaukee, WI	5	U					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						↑		0	Lack of clarity of facilitator roles; federal selection of facilitator; timing of project	
Comanche Nation, OK	6	R				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑						+	Lack of agency staff continuity; clarity of facilitator roles; inter-tribal dynamics; weak political support	
Ogden, Utah	8	U			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				↑					↑	+	Lack of agency staff continuity; weakened political support	
Spirit Lake Nation, ND	8	R	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							↑				0	Lack of clarity of facilitator roles; limited participation	

Location of Project			Collaborative Processes Used					Role of Facilitator							Major Characteristics	Research Technique		
City, State	EPA Region	Rural or Urban	No Formal Participation Process	Charrette / Short-Term Workshop	Inter-Agency Negotiations	Work /Advisory Group	Stakeholder Collaborative Process	Timing of Facilitation Process	Process Advisor/Assessor	Process Designer	Trainer/Coach/Educator	Process Initiator	Outreach / Informal Negotiations	Meeting Manager/Mediator			Impact of Facilitation	
Tohono O’odham Nation, AZ	9	R						🕒	⬆️							+	Assessment only	☎️
San Diego, CA	9	U		☑️			☑️	🕒		⬆️		⬆️	⬆️	⬆️		++	Long term involvement of facilitator; flexible roles played by facilitator	✈️
Portland, OR	10	U			☑️			🕒			⬆️	⬆️	⬆️			0	Lack of agency staff continuity; unclear role for facilitator; timing of project	☎️
Puyallup Nation, WA	10	U	☑️					🕒	⬆️				⬆️			0	Site negotiations were unsuccessful	☎️

Legend for Tables
Timing of Facilitation Process 🕒 or 🕒 = Facilitation initiated at start of brownfield redevelopment process 🕒 or 🕒 = Facilitation initiated after encountering initial difficulties 🕒 = Facilitation initiated late in the redevelopment process, often to overcome impasse
Role of Facilitator ⬆ = Low or moderate involvement in role ⬆ = high involvement in role
Impact of Facilitation - = small negative impact 0 = negligible impact + = small positive impact ++ = significant positive impact +++ = highly significant positive impact
Research Technique ➔ = Intensive case studies conducted on site ☎ = Interviews conducted by phone

Table 2: Locally Initiated Facilitation Processes

Location of Project			Collaborative Processes Used						Role of Facilitator								Major Characteristics	Research Technique
City, State	EPA Region	Rural or Urban	No Formal Participation Process	Charrette / Short-Term Workshop	Inter-Agency Negotiations	Work /Advisory Group	Stakeholder Collaborative Process	Timing of Facilitation Process	Process Advisor/Assessor	Process Designer	Trainer/Coach/Educator	Process Initiator	Outreach / Informal Negotiations	Meeting Manager/Mediator	Impact of Facilitation			
Lowell, MA	1	U					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑		↑		↑	++	Early engagement of facilitator; community-based participation		
Columbia, MS	4	R		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>										<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	+	Mixing interactive participation with expert analysis and recommendations		
Louisville, KY	4	U					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑			↑	↑	+	Political and civic leadership; early engagement of facilitator		
Kalamazoo, MI	5	U					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				↑		↑	↑	+	Flexibility of facilitator role; civic engagement; local empowerment		
New Orleans, LA	6	U				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑	↑		↑	↑	++	Multiple facilitated processes with strong political and agency support	→	
Denver and Commerce, CO	8	U		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								↑	↑	↑	+	Use of local institution to initiate and facilitate dialogue; focus on inter-jurisdictional setting		
Murray, UT	8	U					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑			↑	↑	++ +	Prototype for use of facilitation in brownfields		
Sioux Falls, SD	8	U				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							↑	↑	++	Combined shuttle diplomacy and facilitation of work group to produce assessment		
East Palo Alto, CA	9	U		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			↑			↑	↑	++ +	Intensive stakeholder process in a divided community	→	

Location of Project			Collaborative Processes Used						Role of Facilitator							Major Characteristics	Research Technique
City, State	EPA Region	Rural or Urban	No Formal Participation Process	Charrette / Short-Term Workshop	Inter-Agency Negotiations	Work / Advisory Group	Stakeholder Collaborative Process	Timing of Facilitation Process	Process Advisor/Assessor	Process Designer	Trainer/Coach/Educator	Process Initiator	Outreach / Informal Negotiations	Meeting Manager/Mediator	Impact of Facilitation		
San Francisco, CA	9	U				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							↑	↑	++	Long term involvement of facilitator, with stable agency staff and political support for process	
Pocatello, ID	10	U		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						↑				↑	+	One-day charrette clarifies community goals but proposes solutions that are disregarded by elected officials	
Confederated Tribes of Siletz, OR	10	R		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						↑				↑	++	One-day charrette clarifies community goals and political buy-in	

Legend for Tables
Timing of Facilitation Process or = Facilitation initiated at start of brownfield redevelopment process or = Facilitation initiated after encountering initial difficulties = Facilitation initiated late in the redevelopment process, often to overcome impasse
Role of Facilitator ↑ = Low or moderate involvement in role ↑ = high involvement in role
Impact of Facilitation - = small negative impact 0 = negligible impact + = small positive impact ++ = significant positive impact +++ = highly significant positive impact
Research Technique ➔ = Intensive case studies conducted on site = Interviews conducted by phone

Several patterns can be discerned from the tables and the cases presented in the appendices. These patterns will be discussed here. Following this discussion, we will present conclusions that we draw from these findings.

1. While all of the facilitation processes that were locally initiated had positive impacts on their respective brownfield redevelopments, 42 percent of the federally initiated pilots had negligible results. An important distinction between the two sets of cases partially explains this difference: while several of the locally initiated processes were instigated to promote trust-building and proactive problem-solving, none were initiated after the process had already reached an impasse. On the other hand, most of the federally initiated pilots were selected precisely because the brownfield redevelopments were at an impasse. In these cases, either conflict, lack of communications or some other barrier had prevented progress from being made. The pilots, then, sought to place facilitators in the most difficult situations in order to assess the ability of facilitation to significantly improve the redevelopment processes. The pilots therefore incorporated a higher degree of risk and lower probability of success.
2. The five minimally effective pilot facilitations share a number of characteristics.
 - a. Four of these never involved the facilitator past the assessment phase.
 - b. In all five cases, the role of the facilitator was never clearly defined by the host community. This lack of clear vision emerged for several reasons:
 - i. delays in the facilitator selection or contractual aspects of the project affected the continuity of projects and diminished the role of the facilitator;
 - ii. local leadership changes, with new leadership not understanding the value or purpose of the facilitation project or the facilitator;
 - iii. the host community lacked an understanding of the potential role of facilitation or the political will to open up the process to wider participation; or
 - iv. core participants who were needed to initiate a process (e.g., the property owners, key political leaders, etc.) were either opposed to redevelopment efforts or were unwilling to participate.
 - c. In addition, while efforts were made to locate local facilitators to conduct the pilots, all of the facilitators for these five communities were from outside the community, sometimes from significant distances. The distance inhibited more proactive interventions employed by other pilot facilitators who were located in the communities in which they served.
 - d. These problems were compounded by the relatively small amounts of money provided by these pilot grants (an initial grant of \$10,000), although this effect is secondary to the political and local issues discussed above.

These observations must be understood in the context that the facilitation pilots were experimental, in an attempt to explore how facilitation might be applied to the complexities and challenges of brownfields redevelopment.

3. The impact of the pilot projects is more variable than that of the locally initiated projects. Despite the difficulty experienced by some pilot projects, others were highly successful.
 - a. Of the 24 cases, the facilitation that most significantly impacted the community (Shenandoah) was conducted as a result of a pilot.
 - b. Two of the four processes that had highly significant impacts on brownfield redevelopment were federally initiated.
 - c. In addition, a third pilot had significant positive impacts at helping the community organize more effectively and resolve brownfield issues, although not until additional facilitation activities followed the original brownfields Facilitation Pilot project.
4. The three facilitation pilots with significant impacts share a number of characteristics.
 - a. Each extensively involved the facilitators throughout the redevelopment planning process. None of the other pilot communities involved their facilitators beyond early interactions with local brownfield leaders.
 - b. In each of these communities, the facilitators were located within easy driving distance of the community.
 - c. Funding for all of the facilitators was supplemented beyond that provided by the pilot grant.
 - d. All of the facilitators exhibited a high degree of commitment to the projects, at times working during periods without funding.
 - e. All of the facilitators demonstrated a high degree of flexibility and proactive engagement, initiating a wide range of activities designed to support the brownfields decision making processes. These included trainings, process design, proactive coordination that went well beyond meeting management, and active outreach efforts.
5. Facilitation positively impacted all of the locally initiated processes. These successful processes shared several characteristics.
 - a. In nearly every case, the local project leaders had a clear sense that the involvement of a facilitator was essential. They had a clear understanding of how a facilitator could be used and the range of roles a facilitator can play. They appeared to be more knowledgeable about the potential value of facilitation than were project leaders in federally initiated processes.
 - b. Because the involvement of a facilitator was intentional, with a clearly defined purpose, there was more support for the process and more consistent conditions

under which facilitation proved valuable (i.e., generally higher value placed on public involvement).

- c. Agency staff support for the facilitation processes was fairly stable and consistent over time.
 - d. Even in some cases where local leadership changed, others in the process provided sufficient support and understanding of the value and purpose of facilitation to sustain the facilitator's involvement.
 - e. Facilitators were usually local (either located in the community or within an easy driving distance), and often had significant experience in the political culture of the community.
 - f. In all cases, facilitators were involved early in the process, and helped design and implement the processes.
 - g. Locally-initiated cases were generally not driven by the potential of obtaining grant money; they were driven by the perceived need of engaging a facilitator. In the federally initiated Facilitation Pilots there was a clear sense in some cases that the primary reason a facilitator was considered was for the purpose of obtaining EPA funding. These cases almost universally did not significantly benefit from engaging a facilitator.
6. Most people interviewed as part of this assessment confirmed the value of using a facilitated stakeholder processes for brownfields redevelopment. Many of the characteristics of successful locally initiated facilitations were similar to the traits found in successful federally initiated pilot facilitations. In particular, four benefits of involving facilitators were shared amongst all successful projects:
- a. The facilitator assessed what was needed to move the redevelopment project forward and helped local sponsors focus more effectively.
 - b. The facilitator provided much needed organization to stakeholder involvement, where previously there was little of either.
 - c. The facilitator helped build either local sponsor and/or community capacity for effectively engaging in multi-stakeholder processes.
 - d. The facilitator significantly contributed to building good working relationships and partnerships.
7. Most of the successful brownfields facilitation projects, including both the pilot projects and the locally initiated projects, made significant contributions to building community and social capital. The legacy of many of these projects was a greater sense of community among those who worked together to achieve brownfields redevelopment objectives. In some cases, even when brownfield redevelopment objectives were not met, "social capital" was built. This can be articulated as improved working relationships, more normalized forms of stakeholder interactions and decision making structures, and new partnerships which long outlasted the brownfields redevelopment project.

IV. Lessons Learned

Numerous lessons can be drawn from this assessment of facilitated approaches to brownfields redevelopment projects. These lessons relate to: the role of facilitation in promoting the physical redevelopment of brownfields; ways that local sponsors and partners can better engage facilitators; how EPA programs might better support facilitation efforts; and, “best practices” that relate to enhancing the success of facilitators involved with brownfields redevelopment projects.

It is important also to consider these lessons in context of brownfields redevelopment projects as described earlier in this report. The specific characteristics of brownfields redevelopment projects (such as the willingness of the land owner to participate) can affect facilitated efforts, and the efforts to redevelop brownfields generally, and must be integrated into the analysis.

This assessment also underlines the importance of obtaining support for facilitation processes at the highest level of leadership possible. Where this did not occur, there was little track record of success. Where this did occur there is a strong correlation with success.

A. Value of Collaboration to Brownfields Success

Collaborative processes can benefit brownfields redevelopment projects in numerous ways, some of which are commonly overlooked but are valuable contributions. These include:

1. Creating an “ad hoc” decision making process where no formal decision making processes existed (to gain the support of all the stakeholders necessary for a brownfields redevelopment project to proceed).
2. Creating an effective liaison between community members and local government officials.
3. Improving relationships and dialogue between diverse groups and organizations.
4. Creating linkages that carry over to other local initiatives based on the trust and partnerships built.
5. Effectively building civic capacity and social capital essential to implementing brownfields projects.

B. Impact of the Brownfields Context on Facilitation Success

Numerous characteristics of brownfields redevelopment projects can make them challenging, regardless of the intervention of a facilitator. The most prominent of these conditions seen in the case studies include the absence of a willing landowner, the lack of feasible alternative uses for the property, the lack of alternative redevelopment sites, and the lack of political and economic support for a multi-stakeholder involvement process.

1. Brownfields redevelopment, particularly where an existing business is involved, is usually dependent on a willing land owner. In some cases studied, facilitators were involved in negotiations with landowners on behalf of local sponsors to obtain the site

in question. But as with any negotiation, incentives must be present for a negotiation to occur, let alone reach an agreement. In these cases, however, incentives were either not present or were uncertain, which resulted in the land not being obtained for redevelopment. Land purchase incentives are an example of negotiation dynamics that are typically beyond the control of the facilitator. Particularly with “emerging” brownfields (facilities with a business operating legally and within its permit conditions), this is often a necessity. Eminent domain is often not an option, either for legal, political or economic reasons. While facilitators can be helpful in developing and even implementing negotiation strategies, inherent limitations may prevent their success.

2. Feasibility needs to be determined early in the redevelopment process. Issues such as the potential for economic reuse of the property, the need to relocate still extant businesses before redevelopment, and the availability of potential substitute sites for redevelopment may all contribute to the overall feasibility of a brownfield redevelopment project. Facilitation can help clarify these conditions, and if initiated early in the process may also help attract the resources necessary to create conditions suitable for redevelopment, but facilitation by itself cannot overcome significant environmental, legal or economic barriers.
3. Political and economic factors can counter the best collaborative processes. Analyses of political power and economic factors likely to affect the outcome of brownfields redevelopment should be part of an initial situation assessment and continue throughout the course of the project.
4. Alternative sites should be considered in the redevelopment process. Most brownfields redevelopment projects assessed incorporated more than one site in the assessment and planning process. In several cases, however, only one site was considered. In these cases, if the primary site did not become available, the project had few if any alternatives.
5. Brownfields redevelopment projects require a multi-stakeholder process for success. The inherent nature of brownfields redevelopment projects requires a multi-faceted team of partners to succeed. Each of the successful brownfields projects assessed had a multi-stakeholder effort involved which reflected this complexity. Since economic viability, political will, environmental issues, community and environmental justice concerns, jobs, and other factors are typical of brownfields redevelopment projects, they require a wide spectrum of expertise as well as community involvement. In cases where brownfields redevelopment efforts did not progress, limited participation across the spectrum of stakeholders needed for implementation was present.

C. Insights for Local Sponsors of Facilitated Processes

In the more successful Pilot projects, and in all the locally-initiated cases, a strong sense of need and perceived value led to engaging a facilitator. Numerous lessons can be learned from observing the range of dynamics that characterized both successful and unsuccessful projects.

1. Consistent commitment is needed from local sponsors and community leaders. In several cases staff turnover was cited as a contributing factor to the lack of progress. Frequently staff changes made it difficult to gain and maintain momentum. Furthermore, mixed messages from different staff within sponsoring agencies contributed to confusion and signaled a lack of commitment. On the other hand, when higher level management was involved, policies and decisions were more consistent and also sent a signal of commitment. Such support contributes significantly to the potential for success.
2. An understanding of the roles and potential value of the facilitator promotes success. In some cases leadership of sponsoring or participating agencies and organizations did not fully grasp the value or role of the facilitator, and these projects typically did not engage the facilitator in an effective manner. Furthermore, these projects did not progress as did the projects with a clear sense of the value of an intervening “impartial.” In the projects studied, there was a direct relationship between not using a facilitator effectively and not understanding the value of a multi-stakeholder approach to problem solving.
3. The active presence of local “champions” was usually crucial to success. When champions for utilizing collaborative process were not present or departed their positions, projects tended to under-utilize facilitators. Active support of local leadership is often necessary to move stakeholders through the many challenges and complexities of multi-stakeholder, collaborative processes. In our studies, projects that lacked a champion for the use of the facilitator rarely proceeded with collaborative processes. Projects with identifiable “champions” who supported the engagement of a facilitator usually proceeded into collaborative processes. In cases where champions changed positions and were not replaced by individuals who understood or advocated the process, projects often lost momentum.
4. Engaging a facilitator early in the process tended to support more efficient outcomes. This finding has two causes.
 - a. First, projects that enlisted the use of a facilitator early in the process were generally more focused than ones that enlisted a facilitator later. In cases where facilitators were engaged after conflicts or other problems had developed, projects often had little direction or momentum prior to their involvement.
 - b. Second, facilitators who were engaged early in the process helped resolve many of the challenges and difficulties encountered in multi-stakeholder. Forming and maintaining stakeholder groups before significant controversy erupted tended to lead to a higher degree success and greater efficiency (i.e., less time spent generating progress).
5. Engaging stakeholders in selecting the facilitator is recommended when possible. Where stakeholders were involved in selecting the facilitator there was typically less “start-up” time, as stakeholders had a clearer sense of who would be assisting them and what their role would be. In the national pilots, the stakeholders were not always

- involved. Facilitators identified by the US EPA with only limited local involvement typically experienced more difficulty creating momentum than ones selected locally. Selecting a facilitator who stakeholders trust and who stakeholders believe has an understanding of the issues, politics and culture of the community proved to be an asset in most instances.
6. In most cases, the physical location of the facilitator impacted the success of projects to some extent. All of the successful federally initiated pilot facilitations and all but two of the successful locally initiated facilitations used facilitators that were either local or in close proximity to the community. In the two exceptions, one involved a Superfund site which could marshal considerable resources and the other was limited to a one-day charrette. Moreover, in each of the three facilitation pilots where the facilitator was from outside the local area, the facilitator had trouble creating “traction” for the project. The overall impact of geographic proximity seems to depend on the interplay amongst three variables:
 - a. Local support: when communities held a clear sense of purpose for engaging in facilitation, they were better prepared to identify an appropriate facilitator. Facilitators chosen from outside the community, with specialized skills of interest to the community, may well be most appropriate under these circumstances.
 - b. Resource constraints: Facilitations require more resources when facilitators are located outside the community. The level of available resources should therefore influence the choice of facilitator.
 - c. Proactive, flexible outreach: Effective facilitation for brownfield redevelopment often requires a proactive and flexible outreach on the part of the facilitator. An understanding of the local political culture may assist a facilitator in this outreach effort. In addition, geographic proximity empowers the facilitator to more easily engage in extensive contacts spread out over time, efforts that seem particularly useful in the community-building that occurs around brownfield redevelopment efforts.
 7. The case studies suggest that special care is needed when identifying and finding representatives for the affected communities. Defining the affected community in brownfields redevelopment projects can be a major challenge. While environmental justice communities are often thought of as monolithic in their views, this is an inaccurate premise. In most diverse communities no single point of view or voice represents the sentiments of the community. Therefore, sufficient attention needs to be given to the different voices within a community. This relates to both defining who is part of an affected community as well as who will be able to represent the often diverse views found in communities.

D. Impact of EPA Program Design on Facilitation Success

Related to many of the issues highlighted above, several attributes of the EPA Facilitation Pilot program had an impact on the overall success of the Pilots. As an innovation to bring new approaches to redeveloping brownfields, and as a Pilot Program, it

should be expected to identify aspects of the program that might be modified for future applications. The aspects which seemed to affect outcomes include:

1. The timeliness of engaging the facilitator. In some cases, the time between identifying the facilitator and actually contracting with the facilitator created a lapse during which conditions changed from that originally scoped. This problem was particularly acute in localities where no facilitators were currently under contract with the US EPA to engage in facilitation work. In such communities, EPA needed to search for an appropriate person, often by locating a facilitator outside the local community. The problems created by delay were then accentuated by the need to use an external facilitator.
2. Coordination between EPA headquarters and regions. In most cases, EPA headquarters' staff coordinated well with counterparts in the regions. On a couple of occasions, however, the regional staff were not part of the project identification, which led to contracting delays and allowed the existing impasses in the selected pilots to persist.
3. Some pilot grant recipients were not prepared to effectively employ a facilitator to her or his fullest capacity. At times, local project sponsors did not fully understand how to use a facilitator, while at other times they were not willing to engage in a multi-stakeholder process. In these cases, the projects floundered despite the efforts of experienced public policy facilitators. The problem grows from the program's efforts to promote facilitation in communities where brownfields redevelopments were at an impasse. Both the selection criteria and the inability to conduct an effective assessment early in the process both contributed to ineffective use of facilitators in some cases.
4. Funding levels were insufficient for the complexity of the situations encountered. The program's funding level, combined with efforts to distribute the funds as far as possible, lead to initial grants to the pilot projects of \$10,000. This level of funding was only enough to carry projects through initial stages of facilitation. It put the facilitators in the position of defining their role in the context of a limited budget, rather than being based on the level of effort potentially necessary to undertake the projects successfully. All of the successful pilot projects located additional funding to carry on the project. Some of these additional funds were provided by the US EPA Facilitation Pilot Program, from monies redirected from less successful pilots, while others were provided either locally or from other US EPA sources. While limitations based on fiscal constraints are understandable, a more focused program with fewer pilots may have proven more effective.

V. Strategic Opportunities for Improvement

Based on the lessons learned from this assessment, a series of recommendations are offered with the goal of building the collaborative capacity of EPA, other government agencies, tribal governments, local project sponsors and local stakeholders to participate in brownfields redevelopment projects.

A. Improving EPA Pilot Programs

Lessons learned about the EPA Facilitation Pilots, and locally initiated projects, provide insights into how the EPA Facilitation Pilot, and similar applications, might be improved in the future. Recommendations include:

1. **Ensure the recipients of government funds fully understand the intent of the program offered.** The guidelines for obtaining funding should require recipients to demonstrate a clear understanding of the objectives of the project. In this case, that would include the potential role and value of using a facilitator in general for brownfields redevelopment projects, as well as in the particular context being proposed. This assessment suggests a recipient not able to articulate the potential value and anticipated roles and responsibilities of a facilitator in brownfields redevelopment are not likely to benefit from participation. A grant provided in the absence of this level of understanding will likely be a questionable investment of public funds. This is not meant to preclude capacity building efforts on the part of EPA staff to help local brownfield project sponsors prepare for a request, particularly in environmental justice communities where such capacity building might be particularly needed. Capacity building which conducted a pre-facilitation assessment and helped stakeholders organize for participation would be particularly useful, as it would enable stakeholder meetings to commence soon after selection of a facilitator.
2. **Ensure that leaders in recipient agencies are committed to the intent of the program.** Similar to Recommendation 1, a recipient not able to demonstrate commitment to the intent of the program, and appropriate use of a facilitator, at appropriate levels of leadership within the sponsoring agency or organization, will likely result in a less than optimal return on investment. Collaborative stakeholder involvement programs are typically complex and often contain or encounter elements of conflict. When such conflict occurs, leadership is required to demonstrate commitment to the process. In the absence of this commitment, facilitated collaborative processes can be more easily derailed, which again results in questions about the wise use of public resources. With the commitment of leadership, however, processes tend to have a higher degree of success.
3. **Require grant recipients to prepare a plan indicating how the facilitator will be used, and the relationship to stakeholder and public involvement.** Another recommendation emanating from this assessment is that grant recipients be required to prepare a plan describing how the facilitator will be used before receiving public funds. This is another safeguard and avenue for ensuring that the intent of the pilot program is fully understood. In addition, it provides a mechanism for further discussion about the potential roles and responsibilities of the facilitator before funding is provided. This degree of detail can also assist in helping identify the most appropriate facilitator for the project. This plan is not intended to be a fully operational model, since the facilitator, with expertise in process design, is likely to suggest changes. Rather, it is designed to clearly indicate the carefulness with which the sponsoring agency has thought through the role facilitation might play in

promoting brownfield redevelopment. Again, pre-award capacity building by EPA staff might be appropriate in some communities.

4. **Ensure an appropriate match of the facilitator with the dynamics of the assignment.** The flip side of the previous recommendations is to ensure that potential facilitators understand the nature of the assignment, and have the capabilities and willingness to participate under those conditions. For example, in this case pilot projects were experimental in nature. There was a relatively high degree of uncertainty about how assignments would unfold in each community. This suggested the need for facilitators who are entrepreneurial, with sufficient experience and adaptability to effectively manage the dynamics of brownfields redevelopment. Among other attributes, the facilitator should:
 - a. Understand the impacts of local economics and politics and be able to effectively address the ensuing dynamics.
 - b. Understand the varying cultural norms and values found in diverse communities.
 - c. Be able to engage and establish credibility with the range of stakeholders who should be part of the project.
 - d. Be flexible and able to apply variable approaches to consensus building.
 - e. Work in settings where technical information is an important part of achieving success.
 - f. Be proactive, going beyond traditional roles of meeting facilitation by engaging in community outreach, promoting and coordinating stakeholder interaction in nontraditional forums, and in general working to promote more focused problem solving amongst the stakeholders.
5. **Improve the Project Initiation Process.** In some pilot projects, the early steps in initiating the pilot took a protracted period of time, during which conditions changed. One possible approach to address this issue is to articulate a set of written protocols for engaging regional agency counterparts in the pilot selection process, selecting the appropriate facilitator, and initiating the needed contracts, with a timeline that is transparent to all involved.

B. Promoting More Locally Initiated Collaboratives

Given the success of facilitated brownfields redevelopment projects which were locally initiated, EPA should develop approaches to encourage the local identification and use of facilitation. One approach for promoting locally initiated brownfields collaboratives is to create incentives. One recommended incentive is to create a fund to which local brownfields redevelopment sponsors can apply for the services of a facilitator. By linking this with previous recommendations about demonstrating understanding of the potential value, roles and responsibilities, demonstrating leadership support and developing a work plan outlining how the project will be conducted, funding would go to those communities who clearly have an understanding for how the funds can be effectively used and leveraged. This is an approach different from that used in the pilot project, where recipients were

recruited. While the recruitment strategy was appropriate for the pilot project, we suggest this is not the best way to promote and institutionalize the use of facilitators in brownfields redevelopment projects. Issues to be considered with this recommendation include creating the fund, publicizing the program and availability of funds, and establishing selection criteria and project funding parameters such as funding limits, acceptable project timelines, etc.

C. Enhancing Facilitative Leadership Within EPA

EPA has a history of innovation with collaborative stakeholder processes. This dates to early testing of negotiated rulemaking in the mid-1980's, to the wide use of policy dialogues in the 1990's, and the continuation of these and other programs today. EPA introduced the Community-Based Environmental Protection (CBEP) program in the 1990's which, like brownfields redevelopment, sought to bring together government agencies at all levels with local community members.

Observed from this assessment, it is clear that EPA efforts to fund brownfields redevelopment projects have acted to build community leadership and social capital. How can we best institutionalize these positive by-products of brownfields redevelopment efforts? We recommend that EPA build the facilitative leadership capacity of EPA brownfield personnel at both the Headquarters and regional levels. Expanded facilitative leadership capabilities of EPA personnel will likely lead to more direct contact and linkages to local brownfields redevelopment sponsors and communities, where EPA personnel can help build the capacity of grant recipients to work in collaborative settings. The legacy of this "social capital building" is stronger relationships and leadership capabilities at the local level, which is consistent with the overall objectives of EPA's brownfields program.

We anticipate that this recommendation would be enacted by EPA personnel participating in workshop settings to build their own facilitative leadership capacity, and then leveraging that capacity to support grant recipients at the local level. This likewise could lead to facilitative leadership training at the local level.

D. Improving Inter-Governmental Cooperation

The Facilitation Pilot project demonstrated the need for improving inter-governmental cooperation across all levels of government. This holds true for communications and interactions between Headquarters and regional offices, Headquarters and local government sponsors, regional offices and local government sponsors, and all of the above with tribes. In some cases, direct communications between Headquarters and local sponsors or tribes were perceived as leaving out regional staff. To address this issue, we recommend development of communications protocols among Headquarters and regional staff outlining appropriate roles and responsibilities, and then consistent application of those protocols.

Several of the Facilitation Pilots involved tribal governments. Challenges described in previous sections were encountered with tribes as well, in particular the need for support from the highest level of tribal leadership. In some cases, inherent, historical relationships among tribes, or between tribes and EPA, affected the early stages, and ultimately the success, of brownfields redevelopment initiatives. Due to the "nation-to-nation" nature of

interactions with tribes, however, it is recommended that EPA-tribal relationships be considered more as a joint venture or partnership, rather than an EPA program to which tribes subscribe like any other public agency. In this vein, early discussions with tribes about how to design the program would also likely prove beneficial, acknowledging that no one tribe can speak for other tribes.

E. Systematizing and Sharing the Experience of Past Brownfields Facilitation Projects to Improve Future Effort

Learning from the Pilot program and looking to the future, what is the best approach to systematizing and sharing the insights gained? Certainly one approach is to distribute the findings of this assessment to Regional Brownfields Coordinators as a way of raising awareness of the range of approaches and common threads of successful projects.

Workshops conducted in regions that include EPA Headquarters and regional personnel with potential local government sponsors and other stakeholders, particularly members of environmental justice communities, would provide an interactive forum for exploring and applying these lessons. Workshops could also include capacity building on collaborative problem solving, as well as the interface between the substantive and procedural aspects of brownfields redevelopment projects, exploring the complex substantive challenges of redeveloping brownfields and highlighting the range of best practices for involving potential facilitators and promoting effective stakeholder involvement. Shorter forums could be created for the Brownfields National Conference.

Appendix A

Case Study: Nationally Initiated Facilitation Pilot Shenandoah, VA



Figure 1: Shenandoah Rail Yards

Nestled between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Massanutten Ridge, the Town of Shenandoah boasts a bucolic rural setting. Overlooking forests, mountains, and the Shenandoah River, Shenandoah lies just below the Shenandoah National Park. The town itself is a compact settlement of residences, commercial buildings and a few light industries. Near its center stands a 67-acre tract, an overgrown yet tranquil woodland.

Walking the site, the landscape signals a more active past. The site consists of a flat stream valley from

which hills rise sharply. The forest is younger and more open on the flat lands than on the hills. An old railroad bed has long since been dismantled. The foundation of an outbuilding suggests an industrial purpose.

These indications provide only scant evidence of the vibrancy of the site in the late 19th century. Here stood the Shenandoah Iron Works, capable of producing 110 tons of iron ore per day during its peak years. The tract, long abandoned, was believed to be contaminated, a brownfield amidst a greenfield, an industrial site recaptured by forest.

To the Town of Shenandoah, as owners of the tract, the property posed significant challenges and opportunities. In the mid 1990s, the community of 1,800 individuals had few financial resources to conduct environmental assessments and little sense of how best to use the site. The site had lain fallow for almost a century. This report examines how the town organized itself to resolve these difficulties and marshaled its resources to accomplish this task. Particular attention is paid to the role of the Brownfields Facilitation Pilot Program in this process.

History and Current Condition

In 1837 Daniel and Henry Forrer were attracted to the area's natural resources. Extensive iron ore deposits and high-grade limestone, combined with proximity to waterpower and hardwood trees for power and to the South Fork of the Shenandoah River for transportation, provided a solid basis for iron production. The brothers established Shenandoah Iron Works along the river banks. The town developed around the site.

When the town of Shenandoah was swept away by the flood of 1870, new owners rebuilt further inland. Construction of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad opened new markets, and in 1882 the company erected the Big Gem Cast Iron Furnace in order to expand production. The iron ore foundry produced up to 100 tons of pig iron per day and employed 1,000 people at its peak. The furnace operated for 25 years and was closed in 1907 when it could no longer compete against larger producers of iron.

The Big Gem Furnace was dismantled in 1917. Most of the site was left unused since that time. A municipal solid waste dump operated on its northern edge in the 1950's and 1960's. Later, an 80 to 100 home trailer court proposed, as well as some industrial and commercial redevelopment on the south side of the tract, neither of which was implemented because of possible contamination on the site. In 1995, the 68 acre site was donated to the town by Lukens Steel Corporation.

With the close of iron works, the town's primary economic hub centered on the rail yards. The town's commercial center faced the railroad, and the rail system provided the town's light industry with easy access to markets. Shenandoah grew into a compact town of 1,878 residents living within 1.4 square miles. Unusually dense for a rural community, it lies in the top quartile of the state in residents per square mile.¹

In 1957, with the rise of the interstate highway system and the drop in rail transportation, the Norfolk and Western Railroad closed its maintenance and operations facilities. Most businesses in this area have since closed, with the buildings deteriorating and the downtown remaining dormant.² The town, once bustling in the 1950s, declined.



Figure 2: Shenandoah Downtown, 2002

Located 30 minutes from the nearest interstate, the relative dearth of economic opportunities in Shenandoah and the rural context within which Shenandoah sits can be seen in its median family income of \$37,896 (30% lower than Virginia), poverty rate of 12% (25% higher than Virginia) and median owner-occupied home value of \$81,200 (32% lower than Virginia). For adults 25 years of age or older, 70% of males and 28% of females

have attained education beyond high school, compared to 81% and 55% respectively for the state as a whole. Employment is concentrated in a few manufacturing companies. Over 40% of the town's workforce is employed by five companies: Genie Company, KVK Precision Specialties, Sullivan Mechanical Contractors, Norfolk Southern Corporation, and Cerro Metals.

Shenandoah is one of the smallest communities in the United State to receive a Brownfields grant.³ It has also proven remarkably successful at planning for and implementing complex redevelopment projects. How can we best understand this success, and the role of the Brownfields Facilitation Pilot Project in enabling the community to achieve these results?

A Town Rising

Shenandoah's efforts and the role of the Brownfields Facilitation Pilot can be best understood within the context of a small town awakening to a fuller sense of its potential.

From the 1960s to the early 1990s, the downtown area slowly declined. The town leadership, consisting almost exclusively of retired persons, generally maintained a low profile during the period. The elected officials and city staff focused on the limits to the local tax base. They managed the operations of the town, but did not plan for the longer term. Economic and physical redevelopment was largely seen as outside the scope of local town government.

In the 1970s and 80s, the decline in the downtown reinforced the movement of businesses to Rte 340, the road that connected Shenandoah to the rest of Page County. The downtown hollowed out, as the Councilors moved their own businesses as well. The older folks remembered the town as a bustling railroad town that had died off. The decline struck the residents as inevitable, a consequence of shifting technologies beyond their control.

By the 1990s, however, some residents developed a new willingness to invest time, energy and resources into revitalizing the community. In the mid-1990s, residents attempted to organize three different initiatives to better Shenandoah. Shenandoah 2000 focused on the beautification of Shenandoah, but could not galvanize enough support. The initiative failed. At about the same time, a bank manager tried to organize a local Chamber of Commerce. This too fell flat. But early in 1996, a third initiative was attempted. This one succeeded.

Citizens for Shenandoah was a volunteer organization made up of businesses and individuals with an interest in improving the Shenandoah area. While oriented toward stimulating the local economy, the civic group sought to do this by “encouraging cooperation and building leadership in the community” and by creating “features and plans to improve the appearance of the town”.⁴ In general its mission was broader than economic development, focusing on aesthetics, quality of life and civic engagement as well. Modeled after Elkton’s Main Street Program, Citizens for Shenandoah was started by Marsha Devers, Director of the Main Street Program and a resident of Shenandoah and Chuck Tomney, a local entrepreneur. At its first meeting, twenty people showed up. In a small town, this is sizable; twenty people constitutes more than one percent of the town’s population.

Citizens for Shenandoah quickly concluded that if change was to occur, new town leadership was needed. The average age of the Town Councilors was 70 years old. Council races were largely uncompetitive. Members of Citizens for Shenandoah therefore encouraged emerging civic leaders to run for town office. They recruited David Hinkle, a member of the Planning Commission who believed in looking forward instead of back, and who preferred to talk about how to create change rather than why condition prevented change. When elected, he retained his position on the Planning Commission, effectively linking the two bodies. Chuck Tomney, one of the founders of Citizens for Shenandoah, had his “arm twisted” as well and was also elected. Three Council positions were open for election that year; all three were won by the new recruits.

The new leadership was considerably younger, more proactive and openly inviting of change. While born in Shenandoah, they had lived elsewhere for a period and then moved back. An in-migration of retired folks from northern Virginia and the increasing connections between Shenandoah and the regional economy centered in

Harrisburg meant that younger people stayed around more and that residents were more open to change.

While supportive, most in the community remained skeptical. Every decision that required long term thinking also required a lot of education. Most importantly, change depended on creating hope for improvement. This required not only a need to accentuate the positive, but also to create a package that looked doable and could generate excitement. At first, the town had little idea of how to do this. The Planning Commission wrote a fake real estate advertisement that highlighted its high quality of life. The advertisement constituted their vision of what Shenandoah could become.

Some of the first changes showed up in town governance. The Planning Commission, which hardly ever met in the early 90s, soon met monthly. Commissioners were trained in planning and became Certified Planning Commissioners. Councilors also started going to orientation meetings for new officials offered by Virginia Municipal League.

Town Council turned to James Madison University for help. Town Councilors approached JMU's Office of Economic Development and Partnership Programs for technical assistance. JMU identified a Master of Public Administration graduate student as an intern to become the town's part-time Economic/Grant Coordinator. The intern worked to identify potential redevelopment options, research funding opportunities, and build new partnerships with state, federal, nonprofit and private sectors entities. JMU's Special Assistant to the President for Economic Development and Partnership Programs and faculty from various academic disciplines supported the redevelopment efforts.⁵ JMU also helped the Town Council understand that attracting a major industry would not be a fruitful economic development strategy, since Shenandoah lacked the infrastructure needed. Instead, the town focused on creating a diversified economy, a mixture of bedroom community with an economic base of small companies and tourism.

Originally, the \$12,000 cost to hire the intern seemed too high for Council.



Figure 3: The Town of Shenandoah's Emblem

Despite considerable resistance, they were eventually sold on the hopes of gaining grant monies. The first intern, Charles Meek, started in September 1997. Chris LaRosa came in spring of 1998 and stayed until November of 1999.

The student interns were given a difficult task, requiring enormous hours of work. They put their heart and soul into it. And the town leadership backed them, meeting with them often over lunch to work out strategies and tactics and sending them to seminars to help their work. In many respects, the interns made the most difference to the success of the town, because they provided

energy and some continuity to the various projects.

JMU was also very helpful in obtaining the town's first brownfields grant. Town Councilors talked extensively with JMU about the idea of brownfields and Superfund, about fears of EPA. EPA might come down and run things. Shenandoah did not fit the negative stereotypes associated with brownfields. The Town Manager at that time opposed the application. JMU put a lot of resources into helping the town with the application. In the end, the town eventually took a gamble and applied.

The town's willingness to invest in progress paid off. Over the next four years, the town would conduct many significant projects without any new taxes while their cash reserves rose from \$1 million to \$1.8 million. Shenandoah was soon able to hire both an Economic Development Director and Assistant, the only town of their size in the state to do so.

Success was not immediate. In 1998, the town first organized a Memorial Day Parade to celebrate the opening of Shebang City (a "shebang" is a temporary shelter of poles and branches, built during the Civil War when the army would be staying in the area for an extended period of time). The celebration fell apart. But the town residents who organized the event persisted. Today it is a three day festival, with dances and music, car and craft shows, and an 80-unit parade. On various years, the town was able to attract both the governor and lieutenant governor to act as grand marshal. The growth in the celebrations suggests a greater confidence and a willingness to take on bigger challenges. The celebrations also help bind the community and create excitement.

Yet the early changes were fragile. Before the creation of the Advisory Group, a handful of people shared a vision. The group knew it needed to broaden community involvement, but they lacked the resources to effectively run meetings. They found it hardest to sell hope to local people who too often focused on how Shenandoah used to be in the 1950s and did not believe that Shenandoah could come back again.

Coalescing Support Through Concrete Projects

Big Gems was the town's first big project. It proved to be the training ground for a series of even more complex redevelopment programs. In this respect, funding by the US EPA generated impacts well beyond the redevelopment of the Big Gems site.

The Brownfields Assessment Pilot grant, finalized in October 1998, provided \$200,000 to help



Figure 4: Big Gem Site

the town determine the type, extent, and magnitude of any contamination present in the soil or groundwater of the Big Gem tract, create a cleanup and redevelopment plan, conduct community outreach programs, and form partnerships with surrounding small



towns and universities to gain support, expertise, and added insights during the project term.⁶

To a town with an annual budget less than a million a year, managing a \$200,000 grant proved challenging. The interns, serving as Economic Development Directors, helped considerably by focusing on the details. But by the summer of

1999, the town remained largely focused on the environmental assessment. The Phase I Assessment, conducted by John McNair & Associates, continued until throughout the summer, being finished in October 1999. Planning for the redevelopment of the site had not yet begun. Residents were generally supportive but doubtful that this would lead to anything.

The Town Council understood that they needed to involve the community more productively, but were largely doing so through personal conversations. Even in a town of 1,800 residents, personal contact is an insufficient basis for moving a project like Big Gem forward. If the town was to build more solid community support, a more productive form of participation was needed. Civic leaders understood this, but lacked models for how to proceed.

Enhancing Civic Capacity Through Facilitation and Training

It was in this context that the town was approached by the US EPA concerning receipt of a \$10,000 Brownfields Facilitation Pilot grant. The town had not applied for this support. Rather, recipients of this grant were identified by EPA staff, based on input from regional EPA project managers. EPA sought to identify communities with a significant need for more effective participation, in which facilitation might prove useful. The EPA was attracted to Shenandoah's partnership with JMU and its efforts to strengthen both its political and civic capacity to govern. EPA offered to the town the assistance of two facilitators: Eddie Bumbaugh, Director of Mediation Services for the Harrisonburg Community Mediation Center, and Frank Dukes, the Associate Director of the University of Virginia's Institute for Environmental Negotiation

To some on the Town Council, the offer of facilitation appeared unnecessary. The Town was not in conflict over the Big Gems site, so why bring in a facilitator? A few key leaders felt that facilitation might prove helpful, but were not sure how. But once employed, the facilitators focused on capacity building rather than conflict management, and this made a lot of sense to the town leaders involved in the effort. The focus was on getting partnerships to work, on getting everyone onto the same page. Once the process was initiated, it soon became widely supported.

On May 12, 1999, the facilitators met with the Economic Development Director for both to get to know each other and to share concerns. Two meetings with the core

group of residents who were supportive of the Big Gem project were held on June 1st and 15th. The meetings focused on building trust, brainstorming about ways to proceed, defining the role of the facilitators, and helping the residents organize their ideas and develop the Resource and Advisory Committee structure.

The core group believed that the key problem was that citizens had no faith in change. For the community outreach to work, involved residents would need to connect person to person, to encourage involvement in planning. The facilitators helped the group identify key people and stakeholders, including resistant or apathetic people who might support the changes if they were more involved. The local residents used personal connections to get through to these people.

The core group also identified a problem in communication with John McNair & Associates, the engineering firm conducting the assessment. The group felt disconnected from the assessment process, a sense that the experts were in charge and taking care of the problem, but were not keeping the town involved. Rather than intervene directly, the facilitators discussed strategies for handling this, and the town resolved this on their own.

The town established the Big Gem Advisory Board in August 1999. The Board consisted of an Action Group and Resource Group. The Action Group consisted of local residents and officials who were responsible for coming up with a redevelopment plan for the Big Gem site. The Action Group was made up of a six-person steering committee and three ten-person subcommittees. The subcommittees focused on Planning and Design, Finance and Fundraising, and Outreach and Public Relations. Each subcommittee was co-chaired by two members of the steering committee.

The Resource Group consisted of officials and technical assistance providers from public, private, nonprofit and university-based organizations such as James Madison University, the University of Virginia, the Shenandoah National Park, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, and private corporations. The Resource Group was designed to provide advice to the Action Group and to formalize partnerships with agencies and

organizations that could help the town implement the plan once it was developed.



Figure 5: Big Gem Meeting

On August 26th, the core group held their first community meeting. The meeting was designed to build community excitement for the project and to identify 30 community volunteers for the three subcommittees. The meeting was advertised by both high and low

tech: on the town's web site as well as notices at grocery stores and other public gathering spots. The Steering Committee took responsibility for reaching out to their neighbors and friends, one on one, to build momentum.

At this meeting, participants clearly recognized that facilitation was very helpful for building this momentum. Eighty people showed up, meaning that approximately 15% of all families in the town were represented at the meeting. Attendees included some federal and state agencies, which helped legitimize the effort and gave evidence of the potential for the project. The meeting was originally scheduled to include a walking and tractor-trailer tour of the site, but when inclement weather forced a change of plans, the facilitators got down to work instead. The participants broke into three groups to generate ideas, and out of these groups 30 people were identified to serve on the subcommittees. The Advisory Board was up and running.

Between August and January, the subcommittees mostly worked on their own, generally meeting twice a month. The steering committee met to discuss potentially controversial ideas and to help with logistics and strategy. The facilitators provided process consultations when needed. The Economic Development Director coordinated the entire process.

During this time, the University of Virginia's Department of Landscape Architecture focused its annual graduate student design contest on the Big Gem site. Twenty students participated, forming teams of two to five students each. The process included a four-day charrette, in which the students worked with residents of Shenandoah to develop their vision for the site and possible redevelopment options.

Three judges from the town went to UVA to critique the designs. The designs helped to generate a number of redevelopment options both for the Big Gem site and for the downtown area. Residents were encouraged to think not only about redeveloping the Big Gem site, but also the downtown, located within easy walking distance.

The designs were then displayed in the community center in an organized meeting to discuss proposals and conceptual designs. The town also held a meeting of business leaders over dinner. The partnership led to more press and publicity. The town hired one of the graduating students, Laurel Haarlow, to continue to work with the residents to help render a formal design for the tract.

The second facilitated Big Gem Advisory Board public meeting was held on January 18, 2000. Despite cold and icy conditions, 70 people showed up. Perhaps it was the door prize (a brick found on the Big Gem site) that attracted them. The meeting demonstrated the complexity of the project, with reports and discussion on the environmental site assessment, a market study, and the Big Gem Master Plan, as well as the work of each of the subcommittees.

Citizens of Shenandoah were learning how to pull their ideas together as a community. Big Gems provided them with resources and formalized their organizations and their stakeholder involvement process. But the \$10,000 Facilitation Pilot Grant was quickly running out, and the Advisory Board realized that they needed more help.

Specifically, they were concerned with sustainability of their processes. The town was gearing up a planning process to revitalize the downtown, and this effort would soon

prove to be even more complex than the Big Gem project. Civic leaders felt that they could easily be pulled too thin if they did not learn how to more effectively promote and organize community participation.

Most of the processes skills were coming to rest with the economic development director who was, until November 1999, a graduate student intern. The town had since hired Charles Meek, who had served as the town's first intern and who had by now graduated, to fill the position. But few believed that he would work in a small town indefinitely. The community had good human capital that needed more formal integration. The Advisory Group wanted to develop the skills of local residents to help stakeholders develop better plans, with greater community buy-in.

The town contributed some of their own funds to extend the contract, but also requested that the facilitation team train local residents to manage meetings, so that the town would have the capacity to organize itself in the future. The EPA facilitation pilot project manager, Lee Scharf, was intrigued with the idea and obtained the funds needed to move this forward.

The training was designed specifically for the Town of Shenandoah. The Advisory Group helped develop topics and fine tune the training. The training consisted of a core module and two follow-up seminars, held on two Saturdays and one evening. Sixteen people went through the core training, while twelve completed all three sessions. Four residents who missed the core training participated in the follow-up training modules.



Figure 6: The Big Gems Site, 2002

On March 4, 2000, the full-day training covered communication and consensus building skills. On April 15th, the half day training covered group facilitation and conflict mediation skills. Finally, the April 27th evening meeting covered public speaking and presentation skills. The first two were conducted by the two facilitators,

while the third was conducted by Melissa Aleman, communications professor at James Madison and a Shenandoah resident. The trainings focused on skill building in the specific context of town governance.

In April, the town received \$150,000 from EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative. This initiative seeks to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders work together to assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. The town received \$100,000 in general purpose grant monies and \$50,000 in Greenspace monies. The grant provided funds both for the Big Gem tract and for additional sites between the tract and the Shenandoah River Park. The town hopes to build a trail through these properties connecting the two parks.

The supplemental project was specifically designed to leverage the partnerships and consensus fostered by EPA's Brownfields Facilitation Pilot support. Moreover, the supplement identifies consensus building, promoting community awareness, and developing partnerships as key to the environmental assessment, cleanup and planning for the redevelopment. The greenspace funding targeted the former municipal dump located on the Big Gem site and two acres of privately owned land located just north of the dump for greenspace redevelopment.⁷

By June, the Big Gems Advisory Board had completed its preliminary redevelopment plans. The Board envisioned a park, with walking trails, ball fields, an amphitheatre, a woodland preserve, a pond and picnic areas. The Board also designed a trail system that would provide an east-west off-road connection between the residential neighborhoods of Shenandoah, the Big Gem Park, the historic district and the riverfront.⁸

The final facilitated Big Gem Advisory Board public meeting was held on June 15, 2000. It would take more than two years, until June 27, 2002, before the Board would hold another major public meeting. The Big Gem Advisory Board faced two significant challenges. The first came from the mismatch between the rate at which the Advisory Board completed the redevelopment plan and the speed at which the environmental assessment was being conducted. While the preliminary design for the redevelopment plan was finished, implementation could not commence until the environmental assessment was completed and the EPA formally issued a clean bill of health for the reuse of the site. This took two years. The second challenge grew out of the continuing success of the town at planning for and attracting funding to revitalize the downtown and the Shenandoah river front. This success would require Shenandoah, a town of 1,800 residents, to manage over \$2,000,000 in projects and to maintain momentum for a number of related but nonetheless independently funded projects.

The Challenge of Matching the Redevelopment Process to the Environmental Assessment Process

While the Advisory Board met, John McNair & Associates continued with the environmental assessment. Between October 1999 and January 2000, the firm developed Phase II sampling plan and obtained EPA approval to proceed. Sampling was conducted through May. However, based on EPA concerns with the results, more analytic tests needed to be conducted on the samples. The results were validated in December 2000. The Final Assessment Report was finished by McNair in May 2001.

The environmental assessment report⁹ indicated only two areas of concern. The report recommended fencing in the abandoned dump site because of potential organic pollution and physical safety issues. The report also identified slightly elevated levels of metals (cadmium, copper, chromium, lead, and zinc) in an area near the old furnace. The area is covered with a black ash-like material, generally less than six inches deep and believed to be fly ash from the furnace. Except for a slight overage by lead, none of the metals exceed the Soil Screening Levels or Risk Based Concentrations for Residential land re-use.

A year passed between submittal of the report and issuance of the “comfort letter” by EPA. The Town received its “comfort letter” from the EPA in April 2002, stating that there is no significant contamination on the property. The letter indicated that the level of contamination was acceptable for institutional controls without a need for remediation.

Almost two years had passed since the Advisory Board had completed its preliminary redevelopment plan for Big Gem. For a town that had seen nothing but a series of successes, this delay was surprising. The excitement over the findings of the report slowly resolved into frustration and then disappointment over the continuing delays. The town had little institutional capacity to handle EPA’s approval process. As the agency charged with environmental protection, EPA approached the decision to release the site from clean-up requirements cautiously. The town, on the other hand, felt that the decision had fallen into a bureaucratic morass, that EPA always needed

something else, and that the decision consisted of a perpetual series of two-week delays. The momentum was lost, in part because the town residents felt helpless in the process. They had no control.

Still, this feeling faded after the issue was resolved. Civic leaders remember that EPA had been great to work with until the assessment, that many EPA officials had worked hard with the town to resolve issues. The town was particularly impressed when EPA officials visited Shenandoah to attend meetings or negotiate out concerns. After the town received the comfort letter in April 2002, the Advisory Board regrouped.

The Challenge of Integrating Big Gems Redevelopment with the Downtown and Riverfront Redevelopment Projects

From a different perspective, one could argue that the delay in the Big Gems project was a blessing in disguise. In July of 2000, when the Big Gem Advisory Board was putting further work on the



Figure 7: Downtown Shenandoah, 2004
(Source: <http://www.townofshenandoah.com>)



Figure 8: Big Gem Redevelopment Plan
(Source: Anderson & Associates, Big Gem Park Preliminary Master Plan, August 19, 2003).

redevelopment plan on hold, the town received an \$800,000 Community Development Block Grant. The grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) was aimed at revitalizing the downtown area, and built upon a \$54,000 Transportation Enhancement Grant (TEA-21) provided in May 1999 by the Virginia Department of Transportation (for improvements to the streetscape). Not only did the First Street Revitalization

Project maintain a sense of momentum and change in the community, but it also absorbed most of the town's energy and limited managerial resources.

In many ways, the downtown redevelopment project grew directly out of the brownfields project. The town was too small to receive direct access to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's redevelopment grants, but could access the VDHCD's grant programs. VDHCD provided the town with a \$15,000 Small Cities CDBG planning grant in July of 1999, specifically recognizing that the redevelopment of Big Gem was a critical community development need. Because the state's CDBG program focused on small rural communities, the VDHCD had no official experience of working with brownfields sites. Yet the department recognized that the redevelopment of economically obsolete sites was an increasingly important concern for these communities. Shenandoah became the impetus for the state's Virginia Site Redevelopment Program.

The CDBG process grew from the Big Gem project in a more immediate way as well. At Shenandoah's first CDBG planning grant meeting, held on October 13, 1999, VDHCD and town representatives designed a process that would build upon and integrate with the Big Gem project. The First Street Management Team was formed with an almost identical structure and mostly the same people as the Big Gem Advisory Board. The first CDBG planning grant public meeting was integrated into the January 18, 2000 meeting of the Advisory Board as well.

Thus, civic leadership developed through the Big Gem project was carried over into the CDBG process. At the same time, the First Street redevelopment process proved more controversial than the Big Gems process. Older residents and store owners were concerned because this project would require direct investments by both the owners and the town. The First Street Management Team, while facing new challenges, had already built a strong foundation of civic engagement.



Figure 9: Town of Shenandoah, showing location of Big Gem and other redevelopment projects.
(Source: USGS and Town Plans)

In the past five years, the town has received \$2,173,743 in grants to promote its revitalization projects.¹⁰ These fall into four major sets of projects: Big Gem brownfields redevelopment, restoration and revitalization of the downtown area, development of a recreational park on the Shenandoah river, and general economic development. The first three of these projects are synergistic, a redevelopment of historic and natural features in close proximity to each other. The Big Gem project, as the first of these major redevelopment efforts, helped build the civic and institutional capital needed to design, manage and implement these major efforts.

Reinvigorating the Big Gems Advisory Board

On June 27, 2002, the Board held a community meeting designed to celebrate the clean bill of health that EPA gave the Big Gem, to remind people of how far they had come and to reinvigorate the implementation process. Fifty people show up, including several key actors who no longer lived in Shenandoah. The Board refocused its attention on finalizing the design, getting new financing and making visible progress.

Momentum has since returned. In January of 2003, Shenandoah created a 13-member Parks and Recreation Committee to guide the Big Gem Redevelopment Project. In March the town hired Anderson & Associates, Inc. to finalize the site plan. Components of the planned park include walking trails, ball fields, an amphitheatre, a woodland preserve, a pond and picnic areas. Other components being considered include a dog park, playground, and swimming pool.

To produce the master plan, Anderson & Associates facilitated several public meetings in the spring and summer of 2003. These meetings helped reenergize the community. Phase One of redevelopment for the Big Gem Park has now been initiated. The plans include forest restoration and terraced picnic areas overlooking the Big Gem Pond. The pond project was selected because it was doable, was widely supported in the

community, and was highly visible. The Virginia Department of Forestry provided the town with a \$25,000 Urban & Community Forestry Assistance Grant for the Big Gem/Shenandoah River Rehabilitation Project in April and July 2003. In the spirit of a small town community, much of the work is being conducted with volunteer labor and donated materials.

Facilitation Team Effectiveness

The impact of the facilitation team can be divided into four groups of activities: process design, facilitation, networking/empowerment and training. Advisory Board members and civic leaders rated the facilitation team very highly in all four activities. The high ratings were universal amongst the participants interviewed.

Process Design

The facilitators' first efforts involved designing the Advisory Board structure, including the design for the Steering Committee, the Action Group and the Resource Group. Up until then, only a handful of civic leaders had been active in the Big Gem redevelopment process. These participants recognized the need to expand the process, both because the planning process would take the energy of more people than were currently involved and because community support needed to be built. Yet those already engaged had only a vague sense about how best to build participation and support. By working with the core group to design a process with a well delineated timeline and clear roles and responsibilities, expanded participation could be channeled productively. In turn, clarity of roles also made it easier to attract participation and generate excitement. Participants knew what was expected of them, and could visualize the products needed. The process was able to attract 50 to 70 participants per meeting from the general public and 30 ongoing participants in the subcommittee system.

The process design also clarified the relationship between town residents and outside advisors, adding legitimacy to both roles. The formalization of the outside advisors within the Resource Group helped create a pool of advocates for both the process and for the implementation of its plans. It also promoted clearer lines of communication.



Figure 10: Phase I implementation: thinning of underbrush and construction of the gazebo and picnic areas

Participants indicated that the Advisory Board was the best participatory process Shenandoah ever had.

Process timing was also very good. Community leaders had tried to self-organize but had not yet succeeded. They shared a clear desire to initiate an open and participatory process and a clear set of goals for that process. Conditions for initiating the process were therefore ripe. In some ways, this was fortuitous, but in other ways, it reflects the judgment of the EPA officers who identified the town as ripe for facilitation support.

Facilitation

The facilitators were greatly appreciated for their professional expertise and personable approach to facilitation. Participants consistently praised their skills at expediting meetings; getting people to talk in an organized, structured manner; setting an agenda and keeping participants focused and on time; and restating what people had said in a way that supported yet clarified points. Participants also frequently affirmed that the neutrality and objectivity of the facilitators added legitimacy to the process because town residents were all already known for their positions on issues. At the same time, the facilitators were seen as very personable and open. Finally, participants commended the facilitators capacity to help the group set goals with specific timelines, and to use those timelines to force progress. They contributed significantly to the momentum of the Advisory Board.

Two comments stand out: first, that the facilitators made meeting management seem simple, and second, that they set a high standard as an example to the town.

Networking/Empowerment

Participants noted that the facilitators had a better understanding of what the group was capable of doing than did the participants. They helped participants think things through, helped them look outside the box. Within the community, the facilitators helped the participants enlist stakeholders who had not been involved earlier. The facilitators also played a somewhat unconventional role of helping participants plug into networks outside the community, to get additional resource people involved. They proved to be a useful source of new information, as well as helpful at gathering materials together for the group to consider.

Training

The training modules were seen by participants as going above and beyond the call of duty. Not only did the facilitators conduct the training, they also obtained the additional resources needed to hold the training. This was widely seen as very useful. Twenty people showed up for the training. Most were already very involved community leaders who needed to gain facilitation skills. The trainings were seen as very relevant to the needs of the community, and provided skills that helped leaders to work more effectively in meetings. Several participants cited examples of where they had used the training in particular situations. For example, the town was split over what uses the Big Gem trails should be designed to accommodate. Four-wheelers, horse riders and pedestrians were all seen as potential users. In the end, the Advisory Board decided to make the trails pedestrian oriented, but actively encouraged others to continue with their

involvement, even those this one decision went against their view. Other examples showed a conscious effort to present an attitude of openness and responsiveness.

Overall

Participants also commended the overall facilitation process. Participants noted that the community involvement was so good that other towns and the county are learning from Shenandoah did; that the process worked close to flawlessly; and that getting “75 to 100 people” to the meetings (1 of every 20 residents in the town) was an indication of the quality of the facilitation.

Lessons

If a community is to attract new resources, partnerships are needed. Partnerships, both within the community and to outside agencies, are needed to marry supporters into a single, coherent effort. Agencies seek effective partnerships. Shenandoah could work well with agencies because Shenandoah was doing what the agencies felt was right, and had the focus to see the projects through. Success bred the local energy to move forward, which attracted more resources and led to greater success. A positive cycle was created, in which thoughtful investments lead to new opportunities which generated more enthusiasm within the community for additional thoughtful investments.

Particularly in small towns, success depends on enlisting the voluntary efforts of residents with different perspectives and skills. Change does not come easy, and only with a wide segment of the community can a town generate enough energy to overcome the inertia of a slowly deteriorating situation. This requires a focus on consensus building and good participatory process. Outreach to community and key influencers who are not directly involved in the redevelopment process is also key; otherwise rumors quickly take over.

In small communities where conflict is muted, the most difficult problem revolves around generating excitement and overcoming apathy. Clear roles and responsibilities associated with processes that are driven by a tangible and achievable objective help build support and enthusiasm.

Process timing is very important. For outside facilitators to be seen as useful in a small town, they must bring an immediate improvement to a locally perceived need.

At the same time, the resource limitations in small towns are such that a skillful facilitator can often offer services of considerable use. Small towns must often find creative ways to deal with resource shortages. In Shenandoah, the brownfield and downtown redevelopment projects would never have been started if the town had waited until they could hire a professional consultant. The interns and the facilitators both filled important resource gaps in the town’s plans.

Ultimately, successful projects depend on the emergence of effective local leadership. Such leadership must be both open to new ideas but also very persistent at achieving a goal, visionary yet practical. Shenandoah was blessed with such leaders.

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- ¹ All statistical data taken from the US Census Bureau 2000 Census.
- ² <http://luraypage.com/artman/publish/shenhhistory.shtml>
- ³ Su Clauson-Wicker (2003). “Kimberly Alexander: Shenandoah Rally” in Ampersand (newsletter produced by Anderson & Associates), Volume 15, Number X October.
- ⁴ Citizens for Shenandoah website, <http://www.townofshenandoah.com/cms.php/civic/cfs/>, May, 2004.
- ⁵ James Madison University (2003). The Big Gem Project: A University Partnership to Revitalize a Local Community. Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University.
- ⁶ US Environmental Protection Agency (1998). Brownfields Assessment Pilot Fact Sheet, Town of Shenandoah, VA. Washington, D.C. 20460 Solid Waste and Emergency Response (5101) EPA 500-F-98-187, July.
- ⁷ US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Brownfields Supplemental Assistance Fact Sheet, Town of Shenandoah, VA. Washington, D.C. 20460 Solid Waste and Emergency Response (5101) EPA 500-F-00-046. April.
- ⁸ Paul Haire (2003). Town of Shenandoah Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Prepared by the National Center for Brownfields Reclamation, August 26.
- ⁹ John McNair & Associates (2001). Big Gem Final Report/Environmental Survey, Executive Summary, at http://www.townofshenandoah.com/cms.php/government/departments/econdev/big_gem/documents/executive_summary.doc.
- ¹⁰ <http://www.townofshenandoah.com/cms.php/government/departments/econdev/funding.html> and Su Clauson-Wicker (2003). “Kimberly Alexander: Shenandoah Rally” in Ampersand (newsletter produced by Anderson & Associates), Volume 15, Number X October.

Appendix B

Case Study: Nationally Initiated Facilitation Pilot San Diego, CA

I. Introduction

Just south of downtown San Diego lies one of the most historic Chicano communities in the United States. Barrio Logan, now located at the base of the Coronado Bay Bridge, was once the second largest Chicano Barrio on the west coast. And it is home to famous Chicano Park. The history of this land, and its development, goes back centuries.

The land on which Barrio Logan now lies originally was part of a Digueno Indian rancheria active for hundreds of years, and possibly longer. The first housing developments date back to the 1870's. By the 1920's, due in large part to increased migrations resulting from the depressed Mexican economy and the Mexican Revolution, the area had grown to contain about fifteen percent of San Diego's Mexican-American population.

At this time, the barrio extended from hills just inland (Logan Heights) to the waterfront. In the 1940's, however, the U.S. Navy and defense industry moved into the waterfront area. This began to change the physical nature of the barrio significantly. The community lost housing, local businesses and access to the waterfront. But World War II created numerous jobs for residents of the barrio, which tended to offset these changes.

The 1950's brought more changes to the barrio. Zoning laws were altered, changing Barrio Logan from primarily a residential area to a mixed-use area, with a large increase in industrial land use. This brought many "incompatible" businesses into the area, most owned by people from outside the barrio.

In 1963, Interstate 5 was constructed which compounded these earlier impacts. The Interstate physically bisected the community. This was followed soon thereafter with construction of the Coronado Bay Bridge (opened in 1969) which fragmented the area even further. Both resulted in significant disruption to the community, including the dislocation of families and businesses.



Figure 1: Barrio Logan

<http://history.acusd.edu/gen/local/logan/images/PDR13672.jpg>

Until this time, the residents of the barrio felt they had little voice in what was happening to their community. But in 1967, with construction of the bridge underway, community leaders met with city officials to discuss setting aside land at the base of the bridges' supports for a neighborhood park.

After several years of starts and stops, an occupation of the park, demonstrations, and serious negotiations with the city and state, the park was finally approved and developed. This became what is now known as Chicano Park, highly recognized for its murals and artistic depictions of the Chicano movement and its leaders. It represented a triumph for the community, stopping a long procession of what residents clearly felt were violations against their community. By 1979, however, with the incursion of the interstate, the bridge and incompatible land uses, the population of the barrio's core had declined to about 5000.

Today, Chicano Park remains a mainstay of the community. The land use profile of the Barrio reflects the trend of the last forty years, with a wide variety of businesses and industries intermingled among single and multi-family residences. While the neighboring waterfront has been the home to the defense industry, pesticide spraying stations for imported agriculture, and the fishing industry, the remaining residents



Figure 2: Chicano Park

<http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/projects/178/images/PDRM4393.jpg>

feel as strongly about living in this area as did their relatives and predecessors.

A portion of this “core” area of Barrio Logan is part of a larger area which has been designated as both a Federal Enterprise Community and a State Enterprise Zone. This larger area has a population of about 110,000 people, 85 percent of whom are of Hispanic/Latin origin. About one-quarter of this population speaks primarily Spanish. In 2001, however, the unemployment rate was about 15 percent, compared to a City-wide rate of about five percent.



Figure 3: Murals in Chicano Park

<http://www.chicanoparksandiego.com>

It is easy to understand why land use continuity has long been an issue of concern to residents of Barrio Logan. It is also easy to understand why brownfield redevelopment is a potentially important issue to the community, particularly if it could result in trading incompatible businesses for ones more compatible with residential land use. It is also clear that environmental justice concerns have been longstanding in the community, and remain a major consideration.



Figure 4: Trolley Station, Barrio Logan

<http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/projects/178/images/PDRM4411.jpg>

explores the implications of these and many other dynamics associated with redeveloping brownfields.

In summary, this brownfield project was selected as a detailed case study for several reasons. First, the site is located in a historically significant area. Second, the site involved an emerging brownfield (an active industrial site). Third, the site was located in an area with environmental justice concerns. Fourth, the politics and multi-stakeholder dynamics represent a fairly common scenario for a large urban setting. Fifth, the facilitator played a critical role in moving the project forward. This case study

II. Obtaining the Brownfields Pilot Grant

The beginnings of the Master Plating Brownfields Pilot Project are traced by some back to a chemical spill from another industrial site in Barrio Logan in the early 1980's. This incident made clear the potential dangers of having industries which use hazardous materials in such close proximity to residences, and raised the issue of incompatible land use to a higher profile.

Others point to an initiative by the San Diego Fire Department in 1993. At that time, the Department initiated a Hazardous Materials Compliance Task Force to determine whether hazardous materials used and stored by industries within Barrio Logan were a public health hazard. The multi-agency Task Force identified eight plating and chemical facilities to be the subject of joint inspections by the County Air Pollution Control District, County Environmental Health Services, the San Diego Fire Department and the San Diego Metropolitan Wastewater Department.

It is likely both these events played a role in developing the Pilot project. It was no surprise then when, in 1996, a group of stakeholders began the process of applying for funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a Brownfields Assessment Pilot project focusing on Barrio Logan. The key issue was incompatible land use, and the public health concerns related to the intermingling of residential and industrial land uses.

The primary stakeholders involved in this process, who eventually became known as the project's Partnership Team, were the City of San Diego, the Redevelopment Agency, the Environmental Health Coalition (a non-profit organization representing Barrio Logan residents) and the MAAC Project (a non-profit housing and social services organization). The main objective of the project was stated in the project summary for the grant application: "The Pilot's highest priority will be to stimulate economic development and enhance the public health and environmental quality of the Barrio Logan community."

In addition to assessment and clean-up, the other major objective of this project was to change land use and zoning regulations that result in incompatible land uses.

But in September 1997 the Partnership Team received bad news. With the large number of requests inundating the agency, EPA Headquarters was not able to provide funds to San Diego for this project. A national Brownfields Pilot grant, usually awarded in the amount \$200,000, for a period of two years, would not be available.

By now, however, this project had received sufficient visibility to gain the attention of EPA's regional office. When the grant from EPA Headquarters was not approved, EPA Region 9 stepped in. The Region, feeling the project was too important to overlook, awarded a "Regional" Brownfields Pilot grant of \$100,000 to San Diego. Although Brownfields Pilots were usually funded for a period of two years, this project was funded originally for 18 months at the request of the City (October 1, 1997 to March 31, 1999).

With funds in hand, the next task was to focus on the site or sites that would be the focal point of the effort. Based on identified objectives, and the analyses conducted

by the Task Force, the Partnership Team selected one of the Barrio Logan sites to be the subject of the pilot. The site selected, Master Plating, was a chrome plating business located in the heart of Barrio Logan, a few blocks from Chicano Park. From the standpoint of the Project Team, Master Plating was a prime example of the incompatible land use found in Barrio Logan.

The selection of the Master Plating site was interesting from several perspectives. As is common with many brownfields, the site was located in a historically important area. The area was also economically depressed, and environmental justice concerns had been raised for some time, linked in part to the zoning changes that allowed industries to locate so close to established residences.

Another interesting aspect of this project was that it targeted an “emerging” brownfield. An emerging brownfield, like any other brownfield, contains hazardous materials. The primary difference is that an emerging brownfield involves an operating business (as opposed to a business that is being closed or a long extinct business on an abandoned site).

In this instance, Master Plating was not only still operating, but was a thriving business that remained profitable and in demand. Usually, emerging brownfields businesses are struggling to meet environmental or economic demands. But this was not the case with Master Plating, which created a set of challenges unlike “typical” brownfields.

The crux of this project, rather than developing strategies to reclaim, clean-up and redevelop an abandoned site, focused more on re-locating an existing business considered incompatible with the surrounding land uses. While it was presumed the redevelopment effort would eventually require some clean-up before a more compatible business could locate on the site, it was uncertain how much clean-up would be necessary.

The issue of “pre-existing” land uses is another important aspect of this case. One of the challenges of this and other emerging brownfields is whether business or residential uses should be given preference. The issue often boils down to which was pre-existing. But that is not always an easy determination, and issues of equitability are not always straightforward.

The end result is that efforts to redevelop emerging brownfields involve a different array of issues and challenges compared to abandoned sites. This case study is intended to document some of the impacts of these differences as they affect planning and implementing a brownfields redevelopment project.

III. Profile of the Brownfields Pilot Site

The Master Plating facility was located on a site occupied by residences from about 1922 until 1973, when the shop was constructed and the business opened. It was located less than twenty feet from the front porch of an adjacent house. Within one block in nearly every direction were additional single and multi-family residences. But it was



Figure 5: Master Plating

<http://www.calcupa.net/conference/2003/presentations/CUPABarrioLogan.pdf>

not the only potentially hazardous industrial site in the neighborhood. At one time, eighteen facilities were identified from the RCRA Notifiers List within a one-half mile radius of Master Plating.

The selection of Master Plating as the primary focus of the brownfields redevelopment effort was, in essence, emblematic of a larger problem in the community. It was by no means the largest, worst or only handler of hazardous materials in Barrio Logan. But historically, Master Plating had been the subject of several permit violations, which was one factor in selecting the site as the pilot. The larger premise of the pilot was that if the effort to re-locate Master Plating was successful then the same approach could be taken to remove and transform other sites with land uses not compatible with residential areas.

The Master Plating facility was equipped to conduct copper, nickel and chrome plating of decorative items, such as automobile parts. The plating process begins with cleaning the object being plated using a sulphuric acid bath. The item is then rinsed and buffed. After cleaning, the process of plating then involves “dead” rinsing, acid activation, plating with copper, nickel or chrome, a spray rinse, a cleaning bath and a “dead” tank.

Hazardous materials associated with the process include copper cyanide, sodium cyanide, nickel chloride, nickel sulfate, sodium hydroxide, hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, chromic acid, muriatic acid and acetylene oxygen. The only waste water generated is the periodic disposal of liquids from two acid dead rinse tanks, a spent caustic cleaning tank, and hot high pressure caustic spray rinse. Approximately one 55-gallon drum of sulfuric acid sludge and five or six 55-gallon drums of buffing dust waste are generated per year.



Figure 6: Interior of Master Plating

Report of Environmental Site Assessment: Master Plating, Prepared for the City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency by Law Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc; Law Project 70300-9-0048-01-916; April 1999.

Records show that Master Plating received several notices of violations during the past decade, but each was satisfactorily reconciled. In 1994, the company pleaded nolo contendere to a violation involving “illegally disposing of plating wastes, and buffing/grinding dust, to an unauthorized point and for failing to properly store, label and handle hazardous wastes.” The history of violations or alleged violations of permit standards contributed to Master Plating being considered for relocation as part of the brownfields pilot.

It is also important to note that the Master Plating facility lies in a part of Barrio Logan that is outside the Enterprise Zone noted earlier. This had critical implications to decisions made during the course of the brownfields project, and will be addressed later in greater detail.

IV. Initiating the Brownfields Facilitation Process

Most participants and observers felt the first year of the Brownfields Assessment Pilot resulted in little progress. Stakeholders interviewed as part of this case study cited a lack of organization and direction, unclear agendas, insufficient follow-up after meetings and little sense of “partnership” in trying to reach common objectives. Transitions in City positions which provided leadership to the Partnership Team were also cited as a contributing factor to the slow progress.



Figure 7: Exterior and reception area of Master Plating.

Law Engineering & Environmental Services, Report of Environmental Site Assessment: Master Plating, April 1999.

Then in September 1998, EPA Headquarters initiated another pilot program to test the role of facilitators in assisting brownfields redevelopment efforts. Each of EPA's ten regions was asked to identify potential projects where the use of a facilitator might improve the likelihood of success.

In concert with the Partnership Team, EPA Region 9 suggested the Master Plating Brownfields Pilot might be a good candidate for a facilitation pilot given the dynamics cited above. After reviewing the application, EPA Headquarters this time selected San Diego as one of its national Brownfields Facilitation Pilots. The result was a grant of \$10,000 to hire a facilitator to assist the Partnership Team meet its objectives.

By December 1998, the process of selecting a facilitator was well underway. The process was initiated through a prime contractor to EPA responsible for providing facilitation and mediation support to the agency. The search was quickly narrowed to a couple experienced facilitators in close proximity to San Diego.

The prime candidate was then interviewed by the stakeholder representatives involved on the Master Plating Project Team. This was a crucial part of the process, as this provided stakeholder input into who would be selected to work with them. From this process, Lewis Michaelson was selected as facilitator for the San Diego Brownfields Facilitation Pilot, beginning in January 1999.

Several events are noteworthy related to the chronology of the project. During the same time period in which the EPA Brownfields Pilot grant proposal was being prepared, the City looked at expanding the Redevelopment Zone to include the portion of Barrio Logan in which Master Plating is located. Initially, funding was obtained to pursue this, but later the funds made available from the City were withdrawn. This would later prove to have a significant impact on the initial outcome of the project.

Early in the course of the project (1998), the Partnership Team recognized the need to secure funds to purchase the brownfields site and proceed with clean-up. The Team initially focused on obtaining funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Both a 108 Loan (to purchase the land) and a Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grant (for site clean-up) were

sought. In July 1998 the City received notice that the 108 Loan was approved. But the BEDI grant was declined.

In January 1999, the facilitator began work with the stakeholders involved in the Brownfields Pilot. One of the first actions taken by the group was to ask EPA Region 9 for a time extension on the Brownfields Pilot grant. The original time line for the grant was 18 months. But it was clear at this point that the project would not be completed by March 1999. So EPA granted the Partnership Team an additional six months to complete the project, with the proviso that progress would be evident in the near future. EPA would later extend the grant period again, to August 31, 2000.

In this same time frame, the owner of the Master Plating land was being contacted about purchasing the land. After first resisting the idea, in March 1999 he accepted a “conditional offer” from the City to purchase the land. Along with this was an agreement to allow on-site environmental testing as part of the Phase 2 Environmental Assessment. He agreed to a Permit to Work on Private Property (set to expire on June 15, 1999). Progress was being made.

Also at this time, the City assigned an upper level manager from the City’s Economic Development and Community Services Department to the project. Results were immediate. Uncertain of the HUD 108 funds (due to repayment clauses) she worked with the City Council to locate additional funds to purchase the land, assuming the owner was willing. The primary strategy was to designate some of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds available to the Barrio Logan district for the purchase of the Master Plating land. Successful negotiations led to a commitment by the City to use CDBG funds for this purpose.

Meanwhile, the meetings of the Partnership Team were starting to demonstrate progress. Decisions made were being recorded in meeting summaries as a means for improving accountability within the group. Assignments made to various Team members were not followed-up on by the facilitator, and this also enhanced accountability. Activities and tasks were now being jointly planned and agreed upon. Everything seemed to be going much more smoothly, with all the pieces falling into place.

But in May 1999, after several weeks of further consideration, the owner of the Master Plating site rescinded both the conditional purchase offer and the access to his property for the hazardous site assessment. After more than a year-and-a-half of work, this was a major setback and the Partnership Team needed to re-consider its direction.

According to the property owner, upon further analysis he felt he could not possibly achieve the same net income if he purchased new land and leased it to either Master Plating or some other business. Likewise, investing the proceeds from the sale would not prove comparable. And a major unknown was how much of the proceeds might be required for remediation of the site. With all these uncertainties and realizations he felt it was not in his interest to accept the City’s offer to purchase the land.

The irony is that if the land had been within the Redevelopment Zone near the site, eminent domain could have been used. But being just outside the Zone meant the use of eminent domain was less likely, as the process undergoes a much higher level of

scrutiny and different guidelines apply. The implications of not including this area of Barrio Logan into the Redevelopment Zone were now obvious.

It also made a difference that the City tendered the offer to buy the land. First, the Redevelopment Agency had more latitude about how much money they could pay for the land. The City was limited to “fair market value,” whereas the Agency could take into account other considerations and potentially offer a higher amount. Second, the Agency could work exclusively with the non-profit community development group (MAAC), whereas it was not clear whether the City could do so.

The Partnership Team had to re-group. What should be their next steps? Should they wait and hope the property owner would re-consider his decision? Should they focus on new properties? Should they pursue environmental assessments on several different sites to help identify another candidate? Or should they go back and work to expand the Redevelopment Zone so that other options for obtaining the land could be available (e.g. eminent domain)?

After much discussion and debate they made their decision. Other sites were even larger and likely to cost much more to both purchase and clean-up. The time and funds remaining from the grant were dwindling. There would not be enough time to start from scratch. So the Project Team decided to put its efforts into expanding the Redevelopment Zone to include the portion of Barrio Logan containing Master Plating.

This also proved challenging. Funds had already been committed and lost once to achieve this objective. And it cost a considerable amount to prepare the socio-economic information and Environmental Impact Report necessary as the basis for expanding the Redevelopment Zone. The cost of these activities, in the neighborhood of \$225,000, far exceeded the EPA Brownfields Grant and available funding from the city. The HUD 108 Loan could not be used for this purpose, and the commitment of the CDBG funds were in doubt for this purpose as well.

With an interest in including some of the Port Authority’s land in the Redevelopment Zone, the Port offered to pay for the cost of the EIR (about \$150,000). This just might make it financially feasible to include this remaining portion of Barrio Logan into the Redevelopment Zone. Along with this, a new and expanded Project Area Committee (PAC) comprised of representatives of local residents and business would be funded. But when this led to some political and leadership disagreements within the community, and problems with the PAC, the Port withdrew its financial support.

At this stage the Partnership Team realized that their original goals for the project would not be met. Master Plating would not be re-located as desired. The goal of purchasing the land, cleaning the site and replacing Master Plating with a more compatible business was dashed.

When this could not be achieved, their strategy of using eminent domain through the Redevelopment Agency represented their best chance of achieving the Pilot’s objectives. And when the funding from the Port fell through, with no additional funds available from the City to conduct the required studies, there was no viable alternative left.

But the Partnership Team pursued one final avenue of activity. With the remaining funds from the EPA grant, the Team engaged an environmental consulting firm to undertake a preliminary hazardous waste site assessment and mapping project. This would focus primarily on the proposed Barrio Logan expansion area and serve as the precursor to more detailed studies supporting inclusion of the area in the Redevelopment Zone. In concert with this, two Community Forums were planned to maximize input on the study from community residents.

Through the balance of 2000, until the project terminated in August, the Partnership Team focused on convening the two Community Forums and completing the Environmental Assessment Study. For the indefinite future, the relocation of Master Plating, and other incompatible business located in Barrio Logan, would have to wait. And for some, the issues were larger than brownfields, and other venues were required to sort through the issues and their implications.

VI. Impacts of the Facilitator

This leads us to the key question for this case study. What impact did the facilitator have on this project? Could he have done anything more to help the Partnership Team meet its objectives? Was there anything at all he could have done, that he did not do, to turn the project around? In the end, was his involvement worthwhile? These are among the questions we want to answer so that lessons can be learned about how to use facilitators more effectively on future projects.

The facilitator began his involvement in January 1999. From then until the termination of the Master Plating Pilot project in August 2000, he facilitated about 16 meetings of the Partnership Team. In addition, he facilitated the two Community Forums held in March and August 2000, from which a series of recommendations were generated. Throughout this period he helped the Team set agendas, prepare written meeting summaries, keep Team members focused on the issues at hand, develop a stronger sense of teamwork, follow-up on assigned tasks and activities, and generally keep the project on track.

Two quotes from Team members help express his importance to the project. One of the City's representatives commented, "We wouldn't have finished the grant if not for the facilitator." In essence, without improved relationships and concrete progress, the City was prepared to return the remaining grant funds to EPA. It is likely that if the opportunity to hire a facilitator through the EPA facilitation pilot project had not materialized, the project would have been terminated and considered a major loss of time and resources.

Another Team member commented, "The facilitator was able to cut through the animosity, defensiveness and reluctance to compromise," in a manner that did not exist prior to his involvement. This was noted as crucial to the group staying together and making progress. As noted earlier, until the facilitator became involved, each Partnership Team member felt more obliged to act unilaterally as a representative of his or her constituency than to act together as a Team. Noting this was a major deterrent to progress, the facilitator had engaged a strategy to build trust and instilled a sense of mutual benefit derived from working together rather than acting independently.

The following sections highlight major aspects of the facilitator's involvement, leading to lessons learned and a clearer sense of his overall impact on the project.

Why Involve a Facilitator?

A facilitator (a third-party, impartial trained in collaborative problem solving and group process) was considered important to this project in large part due to the lack of progress through the first year of the Master Plating Brownfields Pilot. By September 1998, a year after the project began, Partnership Team members were frustrated with the lack of accomplishment. The Team was not cohesive and project meetings did not seem to be moving the project closer to attaining its goals. The project lacked sufficient leadership continuity, communication and organization among the stakeholder group to make measurable progress.

It was in this context that the Partnership Team saw the potential value of having an experienced facilitator involved in the project. With limited project resources, the prospect of having a facilitator paid for through EPA's Brownfields Facilitation Pilot program was even more important. So when members of the Team were able to agree on the facilitator, someone with whom they were familiar and had confidence, most felt like they were getting off to a new start.

Expected Role and Responsibilities

The expected role of the facilitator was to help manage the process and move the Team towards meeting its objectives. He was also to assess whether all major stakeholders were represented and participating in the process. His assessment of the situation was that the appropriate stakeholders were represented in the process, even though representation from Barrio Logan was more complex than initially envisioned. This presented one of the major challenges as the project moved forward.

Once the composition of the stakeholder group was deemed adequate, his primary role focused more on helping the group coalesce and work together more effectively. The issues and action plan were clear, so it was more a matter of focus and completing tasks. The Team felt an experienced facilitator could step in and provide the "process leadership" that had been lacking. The right people were involved; it was just a matter of mobilizing the resources and leadership represented in the group.

Process Corrections

A glaring weakness was identified in the process: the course had been charted but there was no one to captain the ship. And it appeared that perhaps the course was not as solid as some thought. The City did eventually assign a strong and effective leader to the project, and this proved invaluable. But there was no sense of joint ownership or partnership prior to the facilitator being involved.

One of the first and most important changes brought to the process by the facilitator was helping the Partnership Team create a sense of teamwork and partnership. Up to this point, each of the stakeholder representatives involved on the Team saw themselves more as spokespersons for their groups than part of a Brownfields Pilot Partnership Team. The "Partnership" was missing. The facilitator was able to help them

see the value, and ultimately the necessity, of working as a team, while remaining true to their key interests. This created a more conducive environment for problem solving.

Managing Meetings

Another noticeable change was in the way meetings were managed. With the facilitator involved the meetings ran more smoothly. Well planned agendas were developed by the facilitator with input from the Partnership Team. The facilitator prepared for and helped Team members prepare for their meetings. The facilitator prepared written meeting summaries for each meeting which charted progress, problems, tasks, time lines and responsibilities. There was follow-up between meetings to make sure assigned tasks were accomplished. This helped the Team focus on the most important tasks at hand, and on making progress in a timely manner.

Managing Issues

Given the complexity of the issues involved, the facilitator was helpful in synthesizing issues and highlighting matters needing resolution. But the facilitator was not widely used in this project to manage issues more broadly. For example, the facilitator was not involved in helping the City consider its options related to matters such as the application of eminent domain or the allowable purchase price of the land involved. In some cases, mediators are involved in helping parties think through matters such as these. But in this instance, these were not responsibilities assigned to the facilitator.

Another area where an impartial third-party can sometimes be helpful is in the area of negotiations. For example, often times a facilitator/mediator is asked to “facilitate” negotiations such as occurred between the City and the owner of the Master Plating property. But in this case, such activities were again outside the scope requested of the facilitator. So the management of issues was largely outside the expectations of the facilitator in this case.

Overall Effectiveness

The irony associated with this project is that while there was widespread dissatisfaction with the substantive outcomes of the Brownfields Pilot project, there was nearly complete satisfaction with the facilitator and the facilitation process. While one expects a correlation between satisfaction with the process and satisfaction with the outcomes, this is one instance where the two are not related.

Partnership Team members point to the value brought to the process by the facilitator in creating a sense of teamwork. This helped create stronger relationship among the various stakeholders comprising the Team, which has and will continue to bear fruit in the many other dealings these parties have with each other.

The participants felt that the facilitator did all that was humanly possible to make the project work. Partnership Team members hoped the meetings would be more efficient and productive, and they were. Team members hoped for improved documentation of their activities, and received it. They felt they needed to regain lost momentum and a sense of direction, and the facilitator helped make this happen. The Team wanted to be

sure all possible options and strategies were considered, and they felt the facilitator helped them accomplish this.

Partnership Team members did not think the facilitator could have done more to affect the outcomes. They cite political, financial and economic constraints as the ultimate undoing of the project, in conjunction with the lack of inclusion of the Master Plating site within the Redevelopment Zone. These acted together to limit the likelihood of success.

Most Team members believe that even though the short-term results of the Pilot Project were not successful, the story might not yet be complete. All the parties involved, including City government officials, community residents and business owners have a clearer sense of the issues. The project made clear the broadly supported unacceptability of incompatible land use in Barrio Logan, and triggered new initiatives. It raised awareness and visibility that will likely create impetus for change in the future. And the impacts of financial and economic constraints are now better understood so are more likely to be overcome in the future.

Not to be lost in this analysis is the role of the facilitator and facilitation process in creating the path to future progress. Another reason participants point to satisfaction with the facilitator is that he helped create a positive problem-solving environment and positive relationships that will carry into the future. Had this not been the case, and without a clear sense of why the Pilot failed to meet its objectives, the hope for future progress would be cloudy. Had the process stalled due to the problems apparent before the facilitator got involved, it is unlikely Partnership Team members would still be talking about how to mobilize resources to resolve the problems which initially gave rise to the Pilot.

Finally, a measure of the overall effectiveness of the facilitator can be measured by the Team's desire to continue his participation when the initial funds were fully spent. As mentioned earlier, EPA funding for the facilitator was limited to \$10,000. But these funds were expended during the first year of his involvement. The Partnership Team was so highly supportive of the facilitator's efforts that they approached EPA Region 9 and asked that some of the remaining Pilot funds be reallocated to the facilitator, to assure his continued participation through the course of the project. EPA approved this reallocation.

Summary

Evaluating a project at any given point in time may or may not tell the whole story. While the Partnership Team members universally felt their original objectives were not met in this project (i.e., closing or moving Master Plating), each one at the time of this evaluation was already considering other avenues and strategies to pursue the original goals. It is very likely that future progress will be made in reducing the extent of incompatible land use in Barrio Logan, and the associated problems. Then the impact of this project can be more clearly and fully assessed.

Epilogue

By the time the Brownfields Facilitation Pilot ended in August 2000, EPA was interested in initiating a series of Environmental Justice Demonstration Projects (EJDP). Eighteen were selected around the country. Impressed with the activities associated with the Brownfields Pilot, Barrio Logan was selected as the only Region 9 project. Based on his history of participation with the Brownfields Pilot, his knowledge of the issues and the people involved, and the success of his intervention, Lewis Michaelson was selected to be the facilitator. In late 2000, with the assistance of Lewis, participants in the EJDP created a partnering agreement which included objectives of reducing exposure to air toxics, dealing with incompatible land uses and improving children's health.

Prior to the termination of the Brownfields Pilot, in October 1999, air toxics monitoring by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) began in Barrio Logan. This continued for 17 months until February 2001. During this period, an Air Toxics Working Group was initiated among representatives of industry, the community, EPA, CARB and local government. Based on preliminary test results, more intense monitoring was undertaken in mid-2001, with follow-up monitoring conducted in December 2001.

The results of this monitoring were brought to the EJDP, which led to a Working Group on Master Plating based on the indication of potential problems. The Working Group met bi-monthly until March 2002, when the County filed a lawsuit against Master Plating for various violations. Finally, more than two years after the official end of the Brownfields Pilot, Master Plating was closed in October 2002. Clean-up of the building began in November 2002 and of the soil under the building soon thereafter.

It is clear short term measures of success or failure do not always capture the long term implications of collaborative processes. In this case, the apparent failure of the Pilot, from a substantive standpoint, after a two-year period evolved into success after a five year period. Ultimately, the long-term success, however, was due to the strong, trustworthy relationships built during the initially phases of the project. What appeared to be the end of the original Pilot was really only the beginning of the process that led to the ultimate objective of the project being met.

The relationship-building success of the Pilot paid dividends in various ways. In addition to the closing of Master Plating, the formation of the Barrio Logan EJDP was attributed in large part to the relationships and trust forged during the Pilot. Everything else accomplished by the EJDP in some way then can be traced to the Pilot.

Arguably as well the Pilot helped create a stronger voice for the community, which cascaded into new partnerships, new initiatives and ultimately the local government support necessary to affect change. The effective facilitation of the Brownfields Pilot helped create a "civic infrastructure" that allowed for future dialogue and opportunity for cooperation. The successor to the EJDP, a community planning working group, will be focusing, among other issues, on incompatible land uses. Of particular note, the Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) remained active in the Brownfields Pilot, the Air Toxics group and the EJDP. The perseverance and vision of EHC was a key factor in providing the continuity and focus for the "successor efforts" of the Pilot to succeed.

It is apparent that what originally seemed to be a failure from a substantive standpoint, has turned into a series of success stories, the final chapter of which has perhaps yet to be written. There is much to be learned from taking a longer view at the outcomes from collaborative processes.

Lessons Learned

Numerous lessons can be drawn from both the Brownfields Pilot and the Facilitation Pilot. Some address political matters and resource allocation, while others address the process more specifically. Here are 10 of the key lessons learned from the project.

1. The need to have a willing land owner involved. One of the problems encountered in this pilot was the lack of a willing land owner. Particularly with emerging brownfields, this is a necessity. If a business is operating legally and within its permit conditions, the owner needs to be willing to participate in the redevelopment effort. This is less important if eminent domain is an option. But even then, eminent domain usually carries sufficient limitations. And as a tool for redeveloping many sites, it may not carry sufficient political support.

2. The need for a quick determination of site feasibility. Particularly for emerging brownfields, it is important to clarify early in the process if the proposed site is likely to be available for relocation, from both a regulatory and an economic standpoint. In this case, Master Plating was a thriving business, which made its' relocation much more problematic. Furthermore, this was not clarified until nearly a year after the project was initiated.

When the matter of selling the property was presented to the landowner, the offer was limited by law to fair market value. This did not allow for other real costs likely to be encountered by the property owner to be adequately offset (e.g., moving costs, potential site clean-up). Had these economic and financial determinations been made early in the process, another site or another course of action could have been pursued.

3. The need for back-up sites. Most Brownfields Redevelopment Pilot projects incorporate more than one site in the assessment and planning process. That way, if the primary site does not become available, other options exist for having a successful project. In this case, the entire effort focused on just one site, and when it didn't work out, there were no alternative sites to consider.

4. The need for stricter enforcement. Some point to the need for stricter enforcement in mixed land use areas. Where residences and businesses utilizing or storing hazardous materials are in close proximity, as in Barrio Logan, an additional layer of oversight and enforcement should be employed. Some argue that this, in appropriate circumstances, would add impetus to relocating businesses incompatible with their surroundings. Concerns remain that violation of permit conditions are not adequately monitored. The question has also been raised as to whether existing environmental safeguards are sufficient when hazardous materials are used in such close proximity to residential properties.

5. The need for greater and consistent commitment from the City. Most Partnership Team members cited staff turnover as a contributing factor to the early lack of progress on this project. When staff changes occur frequently, it is hard to gain and maintain momentum. It can also signal a lack of commitment, or at least is perceived as such. When a higher level manager from the City was involved in the project, much more was accomplished than earlier in the project when an intern and mid-level manager was involved.

Funding from the City, or the lack thereof, also sends signals about commitment to the project. At one time, the City was ready to commit funds to incorporate more of Barrio Logan into the Redevelopment Zone. Then the funds were withdrawn. Later, the City had another opportunity to achieve this and again could not or did not allocate funds. These actions transmit perceptions that the City is not sufficiently interested in the project to allocate the resources necessary to assure its success.

6. The need for consistency in City staff decisions. It was perceived that the City was inconsistent in its interpretation of what it could accomplish through eminent domain. This also relates to consistency of staffing. Early in the process a City attorney believed eminent domain might be able to be applied, even though the Master Plating site was not located in the Redevelopment Zone. It would need to be applied using different criteria and guidelines, but in his opinion it could be accomplished. Upon his departure, however, his successor did not think it possible. This differing interpretation of law and policy had strategic implications to the brownfields pilot.

7. The need to engage the facilitator early in the process. Universally, Partnership Team members agree that the project took shape and pick-up speed only after the facilitator was brought on board. In the early stages of planning for the pilot, the City had envisioned using a facilitator. But the individual(s) being considered were no longer available by the time the City received the grant, and no effort was made to bring in another. The lack of urgency in replacing the planned facilitator reflects a relatively common perception that facilitators, or impartial process experts, are not really necessary unless matters become really controversial. But this underestimates the challenges and difficulties often encountered for multi-stakeholder groups to work effectively and productively together.

This project highlights the value under most circumstances of having a competent facilitator involved as early in the process as possible. Furthermore, it reinforces the need for a facilitator who understands the political and economic processes that contribute to successful redevelopment. When the facilitator did become involved, he quickly recognized what changes were needed for the Team to make progress, worked closely with the Team to develop good working relationships, and helped chart a course where progress could be quickly recognized. Had this occurred early in the project, his involvement likely would have saved significant resources and focused available resources more effectively (which happened after his involvement).

8. Involvement of stakeholders in selecting the facilitator. One of the keys to the success of the facilitator was that the major stakeholders were involved in his selection. The stakeholders had an opportunity to review the credentials and capabilities of the

facilitator, and provide input on the selection process. This allowed the facilitator to step right into the process and make an immediate impact. Had stakeholders not been involved in the process, it could have taken some time just for the Partnership Team to accept and work with the facilitator. Also in this case, at least some of the key stakeholders were familiar with the facilitator. This added to the ease with which he could begin working with the Team immediately.

9. The value of facilitators to help build partnerships and teamwork. This project clearly demonstrates the invaluable role a facilitator can play in helping build good working relationships. Once the facilitator was involved, a group of individual stakeholders sitting on the same committee, became a partnership where everyone felt compelled to consider the broader interests and perspectives of all those involved. The group began reflecting its name, the Partnership Team. It is not a coincidence that this was also the time real progress was made towards bringing the project to completion.

10. The value of facilitators to help bring focus and efficiency to multi-stakeholder processes. In addition to helping build an effective partnership, the facilitator also changed the inertia of the group. Until the time of the facilitator's involvement, the group was revisiting issues and measuring little progress. The metaphor used to describe the group was that "it was spinning its' wheels." But in short order, the facilitator helped provide a clear sense of direction that correlated with the Team's objectives. Tasks were assigned and completed. Issues were resolved. Time lines were met. Follow-up occurred between meetings. Until this time, the City was in the position of considering returning the grant because so little progress was being made.

Appendix C

Case Study: Nationally Initiated Facilitation Pilot Lowell, MA

Each year, 700,000 visitors stream to downtown Lowell to visit the Lowell Historic National Park. Lowell was named after Francis Cabot Lowell (1775 – 1817), an inventor of weaving machines. Our nation’s first planned industrial communities, Lowell built mills, locks, and canals that provided the city with a vibrant economy for over 150 years. Today, these structures, largely abandoned with the globalization of textile manufacturing, are maintained by the United States National Park Service. In textile mills, worker housing and 19th-century commercial buildings, the National Park Service traces the evolution of industrial technology, immigrant and labor history, demonstrates working power looms and chronicles the transition from farm to factory.



Figure 1: Tanner Street

Located a mile south of downtown Lowell, Tanner Street bespeaks its industrial history. At its north end, the street is strongly delineated by the Lowell Connector, River Meadow Brook and the B&M Railroad Yard. The street boasts excellent access to both the interstate highway and railroad systems. The 129-year old Lowell Iron and Steel shows its age. Next door, L'Energia Limited Partnership/ UAE Power Corporation boasts

a thoroughly modern power generation plant. Head south along Tanner and these large scale facilities give way to medium-scale plastics and chemical companies, auto junk yards and used car sales, and finally smaller-scale used auto parts and plumbing stores. To the south and east, the street opens to an urban neighborhood, called formerly called Ayers City and now generally referred to as the Sacred Heart Parish Neighborhood, a community of triple-decker and single family homes. The local water hole, East Pond, lies in a stand of woods. This mix of industry, commerce, residences and open spaces stretches out along only 700 yards of street. In this respect, then, Tanner Street is like many older manufacturing centers in cities across the United States: an urban collage of land uses in a dense urban setting.

Not surprisingly, given its long history of manufacturing and industrial activities, reinvestment on Tanner Street has been hampered by both real and perceived contamination of its soils and waters. In most respects, the street is similar to brownfield sites located elsewhere in Lowell. Yet in one respect, the street is unique. At its center lies the 4.5 acre Silresim Chemical Corporation property.



Figure 2: Silresim Chemical Corporation Site Before Bankruptcy (top half of picture).

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency, Remediation System Evaluation Silresim Superfund Site, Lowell, Massachusetts: Report of the Remediation System Evaluation; Site Visit Conducted at the Silresim Superfund Site, August 15-16, 2001; Final Report Submitted to Region 1 on December 20, 2001.

Brownfield and Superfund Co-Located Sites

Used as an oil and fuel storage depot since 1917, Silresim purchased the site in 1971. The company was started by a University of Massachusetts, Lowell, professor to recycle and reclaim chemicals contained in hazardous waste. Silresim processed and treated a variety of chemical wastes, oil, solvents, and sludges. Chemicals that could not be recycled were converted to forms suitable for disposal by off-site incineration or landfilling.

Between 1973 and 1976, the Massachusetts Department of Water Pollution Control (DWPC) cited Silresim for various permit violations because the volume of on-site waste began to exceed the storage/recycling capacity of the facility. Conditions worsened after the bank that held the mortgage to the site attempted to foreclose on the mortgage in 1976. Conditions included extensive and repeated spills of materials, leaking and corroded drums stacked vertically up to four high, and foul chemical odors throughout the site. The DWPC initiated action to close the facility in 1977, and Silresim declared bankruptcy in December of that year. The company abandoned the site, leaving behind 30,000 decaying drums and several large chemical storage tanks.¹

In January of 1978, the DWPC secured the perimeter of the site to reduce community exposure. In December 1982, EPA placed the site on its National Priorities List, making it one of the first, and more infamous, sites listed by EPA. The barrels of chemicals were removed soon after the site was listed, and a temporary cap placed over the site. Studies conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and other agencies indicated that chemicals contaminated the site, a 22-acre groundwater plume, and the air.

The studies detected 132 chemical contaminants, primarily volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and metals, but also low levels of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), dioxins/furans, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and pesticides.² The original remedy, published in the 1991 Record of Decision proposed treating the plume using a soil vapor extraction system to pull back the volatile organic compounds in the groundwater. In 1999, EPA determined that the treatment, by itself, would not bring the site up to cleanup goals. In addition, the plume had expanded. In 2002, extraction wells were installed at the leading edge of the plume, with a new remedy initiated in 2003³. The cleanup is expected to cost \$41 million and full cleanup will continue for years.⁴ The pump-and-treat system is expected to be operating for 25 years.

Residential structures are located within 300 to 500 feet from the perimeter of the site. East Pond lies 100 feet from the perimeter. Risk assessments conducted by the MDPH and the ATSDR indicated that while the site may have historically posed some risk to the community, conditions following imposition of the interim control measures warrant no apparent public health concern, because of the generally low concentrations present at the site. The risk assessment also did not find an increase of cancers in the city, or in the census tracts around the site, except in isolated pockets⁵.

Yet residents cite fears of health risks. One study, conducted in 1983 by David Ozonoff, chair of Boston University's Department of Environmental Health, found elevated rates of respiratory problems and bowel dysfunction in the community. The study also showed that proximity to the site was associated with easy bruising or bleeding, chest pains, and headaches.⁶ In a high volume of correspondence to state and federal regulatory and health officials and in numerous newspaper articles in the Lowell and Boston news media, residents complained of numerous ailments, including: recurrent bouts with sore throats, skin irritations, ear infections, colds, bleeding, bronchitis, watery eyes, and headaches; recurrent ear and throat infections; miscarriages; chemical burns; elevated PCB levels; and elevated rate of Hodgkin's disease, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and leukemia.

In addition, despite the overall conclusions found in the MDPH report cited above⁷, residents of the Ayer City neighborhood found the study disquieting. Within a one mile radius of the site, the study found significant elevations in lung cancer in several areas, and an apparent elevation in liver cancer in one area. While the liver cancer could not be assigned any statistical significance due to the small

number of cases and the lung cancers may be related to



Figure 3: Lowell Used Auto Parts

smoking and occupation of the residents, residents remain concerned.

Of more general concern, the properties on Tanner Street are largely underutilized, with the city holding tax liens on a number of properties. Auto junk yards can be seen from the Lowell Connector just as it ends near downtown Lowell, serving as an unaesthetic gateway to the city. The Turner Street Industrial Corridor is one of only three areas in the city where junk yards are allowed. Most of the street consists of either undeveloped land or small, one story structures. The current state of the street is a significant opportunity cost to the city, since the district is one of the few heavy industry districts within the city that contains largely underutilized land.

Some improvements were made in the 1990s, particularly at the north end of the district. UAE Power moved in, and the Lowell Regional Transit Authority redeveloped land used by a defunct circuit board manufacturer under a covenant not to sue issued by the Attorney General to protect the Authority from liability. The land, located behind the train station, is used for repairing buses.



Figure 4: Bond Property Across from the Silresim Site.

Efforts to promote brownfield redevelopment at the core of Tanner Street, however, is significantly complicated by the presence of a Superfund remediation site in its midst. The property across the street from Silresim owes a half million dollars in back taxes. The City has a tax title interest in several other Tanner Street properties, in part because owners doubt that the city will take their property if they fall behind in taxes and in part because

cash flow problems are accentuated by the inability of owners to secure loans or refinance properties. Redevelopment has therefore been slow. The one significant redevelopment, the Welch Brothers Plumbing and Heating center, was privately financed and involved the city releasing rights of way to the owner. One creative reuse involves the Scannell Boiler Works Building, where indoor pitching and batting cages are used to girls fast pitch practice. But overall, the co-location of brownfield and superfund sites poses particular challenges to community residents, civic leaders and local, state and federal officials.

The City

Compared to the rest of the state of Massachusetts, the city of Lowell is a low-income, minority community. Until the 1970s, textile mills fueled the Lowell economy. The loss of industrial jobs continues; during the 1990s, the city lost 58% of its industrial base.⁸ Now, the city has a per capita income in the state's bottom 10 percent, according

to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. The city's tax base fell from \$338 million in 1988 to \$182 million a decade later.⁹

According to the US 2000 Census, the city's population was 105,167, with 4.2% being African-American, 16.5% Asian, and 14% Hispanic or Latino. By comparison, the state as a whole included 6,349,097 residents with 5.4% African-American, 3.8% Asian, and 6.8% Hispanic or Latino. The city's 6.6% unemployment rate (out of the civilian work force), median household income of \$39,192 and 16.8% of families living below the poverty line indicate lower incomes than the state's 4.6% unemployment rate, \$50,502 median income, and 6.7% poverty rate. Job skills and educational levels for residents are also relatively low, especially amongst the immigrant Asian population.

As is often found in older industrial cities, industry, commerce and residences mix in close proximity. Within Lowell's fourteen square miles lie 1,600 businesses and 105,000 residents. Every industrial zone abuts or is near a residential community. Moreover, the city has almost no vacant land. Any expansion of business or industrial uses or improvement in open space must come from redeveloping existing properties.

Because of these difficulties, Lowell's economic future is linked to the effective reuse of its older, industrial sites. The city has developed a strong reputation as an effective partner in brownfield redevelopment. The list of partnerships is extensive. At the local level, the New Ventures Partnership of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell (UMass) has worked with the city's Brownfield Advisory Committee, providing training and GIS support. Banks, business organizations and community residents have come together to provide direction to the city's brownfields efforts. The Lowell Development and Financial Corporation (LDFC) and the Lowell Plan, nonprofit banking and business consortia dedicated to cooperative business development and marketing for Lowell, are significant partners as well.

At the state and federal levels, partnerships used to promote brownfield redevelopment include:

- The Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive
- MassDevelopment
- The Massachusetts Community Capital Fund
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
- The Massachusetts Division of Capital Planning and Operations
- Massachusetts Office of Business Development
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration
- U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency of Toxic Substance Disease Registry
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service
- U.S. Department of Justice, Executive Office of Weed and Seed
- U.S. Department of Transportation

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Postal Service

Lowell's most prominent redevelopment projects have been undertaken by these public entities. The city has received a wide array of grants to help in its brownfields redevelopment efforts. Public agencies have also contributed directly to the redevelopment process. In the North Canal Brownfields area within the textile district, funding from federal, state and local agencies totaled over \$100 million, used to build the Paul Tsongas Arena, the LeLacheur Baseball Park, and the North Canal Riverwalk, to expand UMass Lowell and to restore historic architectural sites. The city has also worked hard to promote private redevelopment that will preserve community values. In the textile district, the city uses strict building codes, based on its historic mills, to promote renovations that reflect the history and architecture of the district. Other areas, including Tanner Street, lacking the rich architectural features and downtown location of this district, have proven more difficult to revive.

In recognition and support of its brownfield redevelopment efforts, Lowell was selected as one of 16 Brownfields Showcase Community* in March 1998. As part of its strategy, Lowell targets redevelopment priority areas, including the North Canal Economic Opportunity Area, the Acre Revitalization and Development District, the JAM Corridor and Tanner Street. The city has been highly successful in obtaining state funding for Acre and JAM, both of which are urban renewal areas (the two districts represent two of only three urban renewal areas authorized by the state in the last decade). As discussed above, the North Canal area has also received considerable public funding. Governmental funding on Tanner Street has largely been restricted to the cleanup of the Silresim site. Private funding for redevelopment has also proven difficult. Tanner Street therefore faces significant challenges.

The Tanner Street Industrial Corridor and Neighborhood

Census data on Tract 3122, including both Tanner Street and the Ayers City neighborhood to the south, indicates that the community virtually mirrors the city as a whole. The population of this census tract was 4,704 people, of which 4.2% were African-American, 16.4% Asian, and 16.2% Hispanic or Latino. The unemployment rate was 4.4%, the medium household income \$43,144, and the poverty rate 16.3%.

Tanner Street's zoning (IA Heavy Industry and I.P.H.R. Industrial Park High Rise) allows a wide range of industrial uses, many which the community considers inappropriate. The community first organized into the Sacred Heart Neighborhood Improvement Group in 1992 to oppose a proposed cogeneration plant.¹⁰ Originally proposed on land adjacent to the residences, the plant was relocated to the northern industrial core of Tanner Street. In 1993, the Group successfully opposed Glen Falls Distribution's proposed cement storage facility. The cement terminal would have served

* The Brownfields Showcase Communities Initiative was developed by representatives from the twenty federal agencies. The Interagency Working Group on Brownfields developed the Brownfields National Partnership Action Agenda which laid out 100 action items that the participating agencies committed to accomplishing. Sixteen communities were identified to test these concepts and to develop national models based on the results.

as a local distribution for Portland cement with material arriving by rail car, stored in silos and then loaded onto bulk cement trucks. Community residents filmed a similar facility in a neighboring community, using it to convince the community to block the proposal. Glen Falls Distribution later withdrew its proposal.



Figure 5: Tanner Street and Environs (Source: US Geologic Survey at terraserver.microsoft.com).

In 1995, the group began its most difficult struggle, actively opposing a waste transfer station. Proposed by Merrimack Valley Processing, a New Hampshire company, the facility would handle 500 tons of trash per day on land adjacent to the Silresim site. Many in the community considered the use to be an environmental threat to their neighborhood. In addition, an ad hoc group of business owners called the Tanner Street Business Association joined with the community in opposition to the facility, contributing both time and money to the effort. The community fought the project, even after approval by the Massachusetts Department of Environment, for three years. Citizen groups banded together under the alliance Citizens Against Trash Transfers (C.A.T.T.). The group was assisted by a legal service called ACE (Alternatives for Community and Environment) and raised \$5,000 to pay for witnesses. Following 16 weeks of public hearings in which more than 20 organizations opposed the plan, the Lowell Board of Health blocked the development because of the cumulative adverse impacts to the

community. The Board explicitly linked the case to concerns of environmental justice, in large part because of damage inflicted on the area by Silresim. In March of 1998, the Board voted unanimously to reject the proposal.¹¹

By the early 2000s, then, a wide range of community groups and civic attention had become involved with Tanner Street and its reclamation and reuse. Most prominently, these include the Sacred Heart Neighborhood Improvement Group, described above, and the Ayers City Homeowners Association, with primarily focused on



Figure 6: Sacred Heart Neighborhood

health effects, economic impacts, and community image. Lowell Fair Share was formed by citizens from Lowell, with the help of Massachusetts Fair Share. The groups focused extensively on the possible health effects of exposure to Silresim site contaminants. Strategies for community outreach included conducting their own health survey, publishing information in newsletters, and using door-to-door canvassing, picketing, television appearances, and intensive lobbying to influence policy. The Silresim Task Force, established in 1982 as a coalition of state and local officials and community representatives, worked for a period of time to improve communications between officials (both state and local) and residents regarding site activities.

Coordinating Brownfields and Superfund Programs

Turner Street, then, faces an array of opportunities and challenges. The district is zoned heavy industry with good access to transportation networks and large tracts of available land. At the same time, its groundwater is heavily polluted, it has a legacy of both Superfund and brownfield sites, and the city of Lowell's economy has only recently started to revive from a severe economic slump. The district, bordered by active residential communities, is under the watchful eyes of a wide range of stakeholders and governmental agencies: residents, civic organizations concerned with public health and environmental justice, property owners, businesses, regulatory and public health agencies, and the city of Lowell.

Often, this mixture of opportunities, challenges and stakeholders proves a recipe for inertia. Each group, seeking to act on its own concerns, effectively blocks the ability of other stakeholders to act productively. The groups pull in differing directions, with little resulting progress.

In many ways, Tanner Street followed this path of greatest resistance throughout the 1980s and 90s. Proposals for reuse of land involved high-impact industries that community residents fought hard to block. Yet few alternatives were forthcoming. Effectively, redevelopment was stymied.

Moreover, EPA's Superfund and brownfield programs, each with differing mandates and funding sources, had proceeded in parallel with each other. The Superfund program's heavy investments into the community had primarily focused on cleanup efforts associated with the Silresim site, while the brownfields program focused on reuse and redevelopment of other properties along the street.



Figure 7: Silresim Site

On Tanner Street, the two EPA programs joined forces to develop a more proactive approach. Seeking to galvanize the community into planning for redevelopment of both the Silresim and brownfield sites, EPA initiated a pilot project. In July of 2000, EPA provided the community with \$100,000 through the Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI). The funds were designed to help the Silresim Superfund site return productive use, and allowed the City of Lowell to conduct a reuse assessment and to draft a redevelopment plan for the site. At the same time, EPA's Brownfield Facilitation Pilot Program provided the city with facilitation support. EPA decided to integrate these two efforts, linking Superfund and brownfield program support into a coordinated effort. The project provided funding for a facilitator to bring community interests together to promote redevelopment of brownfields and reuse of Superfund sites and to examine potential synergies from simultaneous redevelopment and reuse planning.¹²

To conduct the facilitation and planning, EPA and the city hired two consulting teams. Funding came from both the EPA Brownfield Facilitation Pilot Program and the Superfund Program. The first consultant, Versar, initiated the process. Versar is an international professional services firm headquartered in Alexandria Virginia and specializing in environmental protection, as well as energy, defense, information technology and other areas of concern. The second, Stoss, managed the planning process. Stoss is a small urban design firm located in Boston and specializing in landscape urbanism.

The Facilitated Planning Process

Versar was first charged with interviewing key civic leaders and residents, convening community groups to build a coalition for action, facilitating a dialogue between the groups, and identifying other resources that could assist an emerging

coalition accomplish its mission.¹³ Evolving conditions changed this mission. When Stoss was hired to lead the planning process, Versar turned over facilitation responsibilities to the new group, and focused instead on support activities.

The facilitation process, as implemented by both groups, proved to be highly useful at generating a plan with widespread support. At the same time, the longer term impact is less clear. The Community Advisory Board, active in the creation of the plan, has been largely inactive since its completion. The slow pace of cleanup at the Silresim site (caused in part by the difficulty of removing VOCs from the tightly compacted soils) and consequent difficulties in obtaining financing for projects, combined with the slow rate of economic growth since 2001, has slowed the impetus for change.

Versar's involvement with the Tanner Street community began in December of 2000. Between January and March, Versar conducted an extensive series of interviews with local government officials, industrial property owners on Turner Street, residential neighborhood activists, and other stakeholders. The assessment interviews¹⁴ indicated widespread agreement for maintaining the industrial uses along Turner Street. However, differences existed as to the acceptability of high-impact industry and the importance of aesthetics and amenities such as sidewalks, green space and commercial development such as restaurants.

The assessment also identified that all stakeholders interviewed only poorly understood the status of Silresim. While interviewees believed that EPA, the US Army Corps of Engineers (as project manager) and the contractors cleaning up the site were reasonably open, they did not know why the initial remedy had not worked, what would be done to correct the situation, and the impact of the site on redevelopment in the area. This had several implications. First, community stakeholders believed that no reuse of the property was possible until cleanup was complete. Second, uncertainty concerning Silresim appears to have greatly impeded the availability of private funds for land purchases and redevelopment on Tanner Street.



Figure 8: UAE Power

Only one firm with access to national finance markets, UAE Lowell Power, felt that they could effectively secure loans for expansion. Interestingly, despite its close proximity to the Sacred Heart neighborhood, community leaders consider the power company to be “wonderful partners” who are both open to the community and keep their plant up immaculately. The community supports the proposed expansion.

Lenders generally felt that a reuse plan for Tanner Street would make it easier to provide loans, both because such a plan might increase property values and because the plan could serve as a basis for banks pooling risk through development of a shared financing package.¹⁵ Given the low property values in the area and the costs of potential remediation if properties were sold, most owners received more financial benefit from continued use of their land than from selling to new owners. This tended to lock in land uses that underutilized the areas potential, given its location near downtown and accessibility to the interstate and rail systems.

The assessment was seen by interviewees as significant in turning around the community. The Versar team was seen as “seasoned pros” that did good lead work and met people face to face.

Based on this assessment, Versar and the city developed a strategy for moving forward. This focused on a facilitated effort – including the creation of an advisory committee – to develop a master plan for all of Tanner Street. Versar helped the Brownfields Coordinator at the Lowell Department of Planning and Development determine the appropriate mix of participants for the Community Advisory Board.

The initial convening of the board took place on April 17th, 2001. Participants at the full day (8-hour) visioning meeting included residents of the Sacred Heart neighborhood, business owners, and representatives from a local bank, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, the US EPA, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the contractors cleaning up the Silresim site, and city agencies.¹⁶ The Versar team spent a lot of time setting good groundrules and getting buy-in to the rules of conduct. The first meeting had sought to clarify expectations. The community came expecting an urban renewal fight; the city came to facilitate a public-private partnership.

Property owners and residents showed considerable concern about what the city had in mind for the district, with many of the property owners attending this first meeting out of fear that the city would take their property (through urban renewal). The city representatives suggested that the city neither had the inclination nor the resources to designate the street as an urban renewal district, as had been proposed in the 1970s. As such, the powers of eminent domain would not be available, and improvements would depend on voluntary decisions made by owners. A public-private partnership would likely be needed.

Versar is credited with bringing everyone together, of changing attitudes. Even though most of the participants knew each other, they had never had a chance to talk. The meeting was deemed to be very informative. Some business owners who had come very skeptical of EPA and the city left highly enthusiastic for the project.

The status of the Silresim site was also addressed. The presentation by the EPA Project Manager was open and thorough. However, it contained technical language that the CAB members did not understand. Further complicating the situation, EPA was at that time reevaluating the remedy, and could not provide definitive answers regarding the site.

A second 2-hour meeting was held in June. This meeting focused more on educating about the possibilities and opportunities that existed for brownfield redevelopment and Superfund reuse.

Versar's facilitation team was judged to be very good, with good personalities and effective at sticking to the agenda, despite the long history and all the stories that people wanted to tell. The team was judged highly by all interviewees. In addition to the usual facilitation skills (keeping the meeting going in a good direction, keeping it focuses, letting everyone have their say, not taking sides, bringing everyone together), the team was also praised for helping participants understand technical materials.

The startup of Stoss as the planning consultants included several delays, and it was not until July that the company started work. Stoss's scope of service included facilitation. All parties recognized that it was important for the planning consultant to work directly with the Community Advisory Board. Facilitation of the meetings therefore was shifted to Stoss. Stoss' approach to managing the CAB sought less to elicit the broad range of brownfield issues facing the community and focused more on envisioning and producing the physical plan.

Both the two sets of consultants (Stoss and Versar) and the participants found the transition frustrating. Interviewees variously described the transition as ranging from "bumpy" to "ugly". Versar was originally funded to organize the CAB and run only the first two meetings. Because Versar was contracted directly by EPA, city officials were not even aware that their contract had been extended. Because Versar was expected to leave after initiating the process, the RFP under which Stoss was hired included facilitation within its scope of work.

Versar was generally seen as both more approachable and knowledgeable about group process. Versar had also initiated the process and built trust with the community. But Stoss worked off a prescriptive model of planning and the role of community groups in that model. Stoss made it clear that its team needed to run the meetings.

Several practical implications came from this transition. Stoss entered an ongoing process and needed to catch up with the group. Stoss re-interviewed some of the community leaders first interviewed by Versar, plus additional individuals. The Stoss facilitator also wanted the CAB to step back to address additional problems and issues. Stoss wanted the board to represent a wider array of the community, not just the local businesses and neighbors, who tended to be more conservative and fearful of changing the area. Moreover, Versar had already set the groundrules for the CAB before a clear sense of the purpose of the group was established. Stoss essentially changed that purpose from one where the CAB was to set policy and only move forward when a consensus existed to one where the board would generate, respond to and shape planning ideas, but that the planning professional would articulate and develop these ideas. Stoss brought a stronger focus on outcomes, seeing process as imbedded into design and planning. The community's role was to generate concerns and ideas, to provide local knowledge about the physical conditions, institutions and history, and build support for transformation by helping to generate activity and momentum early in the process. The planner's role was to generate design solutions to address community concerns. Stoss sought consensus on the overall project, not its components.

Versar continued to be involved in the project by providing other forms of support, but these were not well integrated into the planning process. Versar produced a marketing report for the area, largely because Stoss had no experience in marketing. Yet the report was not seen as deep enough and not well connected to the plan. Versar also conducted a focus group in early October, in part to address the fact that City Council had not been actively involved in the planning for Tanner Street, but this too remained outside the core planning process. City agency officials in particular felt that Versar's strengths in financial, marketing and implementation analysis could have complemented Stoss's design focus, but that the two teams were never integrated. Versar was paid directly by EPA, and the Lowell officials never felt that they could direct Versar towards particular tasks. EPA, on the other hand, felt that Lowell should manage the team. In the confusion, coordination of the two teams was weakened.

Despite the grants provided by EPA, efforts to make progress continued to be a financial struggle. The city received ten percent cuts in state aid during this period. It was a grant from the Massachusetts Attorney General's Brownfield Grant Program that allowed the city to increase Stoss's contract by 25 percent (from \$93,000 to \$120,000) to complete the planning process.

The Stoss team provided a strong intermingling of planning and facilitation. The CAB also proved to be a venue for informing community members about opportunities available, such as the MassDevelopment site assessment program that provides up to \$50,000 that does not need to be repaid if the redevelopment project falls through. The CAB maintained a high level of interest in the process. Because the CAB was community-based, the participants knew each other for years, some as long as 30 years. This was true not only amongst the residents, but also between the residents and the business owners.

At the same time, the mixed roles that Stoss played created some tension in the CAB. Participants expected Stoss to provide the answers. Especially early in the process, the Stoss team primarily focused on getting the CAB members to clarify their interests, concerns and visions. Partly because Versar had already covered some of this territory, participants at times felt that they were repeating themselves waiting for Stoss to give some direction to the plan. But over a period involving seven two-hour meetings and three major community meetings, the facilitation approach used by Stoss built confidence.

The Community Advisory Board, which largely represented local business and residential concerns, underrepresented other stakeholder groups. Stoss wanted to expand participation and encouraged formation of a City-wide Advisory Committee. The Committee was never formed, but Versar suggested employing focus groups to reach out to these parties. On October 1 to 3, 2001, Versar implemented four focus group comprising the city councilors and civil servants; financial lenders and insurance providers; community and environmental groups; and business leaders.

The focus groups examined positive and negative aspects of redevelopment generally, perceptions about Lowell's two completed redevelopment plans (Acre and JAM), what the Tanner Street corridor should look like, how Tanner Street redevelopment compared in priority to other city-wide planning efforts, the availability of

city resources to implement the project, and the impediments to redevelopment. Each group consisted of 8 to 10 people. Participants wrote down thoughts first, and then discussed their ideas. Ideas such as the use of mobile solar panels for the Silresim site were generated by the process. The results of the focus groups appear to be positive, with value in getting information across to new groups and the building of some relationships and interest in the industrial corridor. Participants also noted that the process felt somewhat contrived, trying to accomplish a lot in a little time.

Stoss listened to ideas, kept people on track, and pulled out the best ideas from previous meetings and brought them back for further consideration. Stoss would take ideas and generate graphics to show the CAB what they would look like. This helped the participants understand possibilities for the land and landscape. Stoss and the CAB completed the plan on January 23rd, 2002.

The Resulting Plan and Follow-up

The CAB collectively envisioned an industrial area with recreational and ecological uses along the creek and pond and improved aesthetics (such as repair of the street and sidewalks and screening of the messier industrial areas from view). The plan sought to integrate the residential and industrial communities, to soften the boundaries by bringing trails into the industrial zone and zoning the edges of the industrial zone for

uses more compatible with the residential areas. The plan included a primary focus on changing the image of Tanner Street, using festivals and events. It envisioned a series of catalysts, physical changes aimed at promoting new uses, such as using mobile solar panels on the Silresim site and the introduction of hedge rows to screen properties and capture pollutants. In the longer run (10 years), a framework plan focused on reusing the Silresim site for an eco-tech park, using landscaped terraces to manage stormwater runoff



Figure 9: Framework Plan for Tanner Street Industrial Corridor, showing stormwater bioretention and wetland terraces along the creek, and East Pond. The Silresim Site connects the two areas.

for the district, linking these two projects to the East Pond area and opening up the pond by removing the industrial condos and by adding recreational facilities, and adding new streets to reduce the block size and open up parts of the industrial corridor to more intense development.

The plan was prepared by Stoss for all of Tanner Street, not just the Silresim site. Some of the provisions, especially its emphasis on ecological management of stormwater from the area, were considered to be “way out there” but also “very interesting” by CAB members. Reaction from the community has been generally very positive, but both business owners and residents remain skeptical that the plan will be implemented. “I want to see some baby steps, not just another plan.” Community residents in particular were highly complimentary of the plan, especially the removal of the industrial condos that separate the community from East Pond and the development of a park. The community lacks parks because the schools were built on the old parks.



Figure 10: River Meadows Brook

To deal with the industrial corridor’s image problem, Stoss recommended and the city put together an Artist Advisory Group. Silresim poses unique image problems which are accentuated by the junk yards located there. The district is a significant gateway into the city. Stoss also recommended formation of a Coordinating Committee, essentially a subcommittee of the CAB, to oversee implementation. The Coordinating Committee was never formed.

The last meeting of the CAB was held on January 23rd, 2002, at which the plan was approved. Following completion of the plan, CAB members completed an evaluation instrument created by Versar.¹⁷ While the evaluation primarily focused on the importance of issues needing further discussion, it indicates satisfaction with the facilitation and planning processes. Of the 15 respondents, 73% attended all or most of the meetings, At least 80% agreed or strongly agreed that the planning process provided a forum for defining the community’s concerns and defining its vision for both the Turner Street corridor and the Silresim site; that the community was brought in early and given ample opportunity to input into the planning process; and that the plan reflected the inputs and concerns of the community expressed during the planning process and adequately addressed those concerns. At the same time, while 58% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident that the outcome of the planning process would meet the expectations with which they started the process, a third of respondents disagreed with this statement. Other statements made clear that respondents felt that if the plan was implemented, it would lead to improvements. Only two-thirds agreed or strongly agreed that the CAB should continue to have an important role to play beyond

the initial planning stages and would need to be active and involved throughout the implementation of the reuse plan.

Largely because of a lack of resources, the CAB stopped meeting after the plan was completed. Progress has come slowly. The community organized to successfully prevent an asphalt shingle recycling plant from being constructed in the industrial zone. The junk yards remain in place. At the same time, the city initiated a small grant program to help property owners enhance the aesthetics of their properties. EPA has provided a grant for the design and work plan to create a green technology and job training center. The cleanup of Silresim continues, albeit more slowly than originally hoped. The remediation will now be removing soil from abutters' property. Three buildings have been completed in vacant lots. Whenever new industrial space opens up, it either rents or is sold quickly.

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Appendix D

Case Study: Locally Initiated Facilitation Project New Orleans, LA

Brownfields in New Orleans

A city of water, New Orleans lies wedged between the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain. Built near the mouth of the Mississippi, the city became a major port, building a vibrant commercial and residential community upon its industrial base. Not surprisingly, over time this mix of port and industrial facilities left behind an extensive network of brownfield sites interspersed amongst its historic neighborhoods.

New Orleans faces particular challenges in rehabilitating its brownfields. This is partly caused by the bifurcation of its economy. The city's economy is heavily dependent on both its industrial base and the quality of its historic neighborhoods, especially the French Quarter. New Orleans remains one of the largest ports in the United States, home to Gulf of Mexico oil industries and to manufacturers in petroleum, petrochemicals, shipping and aerospace. Tourism and related service industries also provide a significant boost to the economy.

At the same time, the city faces basic economic and social challenges. The city continues to slowly lose population. Twenty-eight percent of its residents and forty percent of its children live in poverty (significantly above the average for the state of Louisiana). Over two-thirds of its residents are African-American.

In its assessment process, the city identified almost 300 prospective brownfield sites, ranging from power generation facilities and iron foundries to old canneries and bus barns. The intermixing of industrial, commercial and residential land uses means that many brownfield sites are located adjacent to historic residences and culturally significant sites, often catalyzing or reinforcing disinvestment in neighborhoods and community economic decline. In New Orleans, then, core issues of community development and economic revitalization are linked to brownfield redevelopment, yet the resources to manage these problems are difficult to assemble.

Not surprisingly, then, brownfield redevelopment in New Orleans is heavily linked to larger processes of comprehensive planning, historic preservation and economic development. In this context, the city's efforts to revitalize brownfields are both broad-based and opportunistic. Similarly, efforts to involve the community and stakeholders into brownfield decision making are also both broad-based and opportunistic.

New Orleans has been remarkably successful at both attracting brownfield clean up resources and in redeveloping brownfield sites. To date, the city and the surrounding region have received over \$1 million in grants from the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The City used several grants provided to establish and update a database of brownfield sites designed to help real estate investors, residents, and others redevelop sites. New Orleans has received an Assessment Demonstration Pilot of \$200,000 in October 1995, two EPA Supplemental Assistance for Assessment Demonstration Pilots of \$80,000 and \$150,000 in 2000 and 2002 respectively, and two \$200,000 Assessment Grants in 2004. These last two grants were aimed at assessing properties located next to Booker T. Washington High School, a national historic landmark, and in inventorying and assessing closed gas stations. EPA also provided the Regional Planning Commission with a \$200,000 Assessment Grant to identify and assess underground storage tanks in St. Bernard, St. Tammany and Plaquemines parishes. In addition, the USEPA helped the city establish a Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan



Figure 1: The City of New Orleans: An Inland Port City

Fund (BCRLF) in 1997, managed by Bank One. The BCRLF provides low interest loans (generally two points below the prime rate) to property owners, developers, or others interested in redeveloping a brownfields site.

Institutional and Organizational Foundation for Brownfields Redevelopment

New Orleans has redeveloped a significant number of brownfield sites. These include construction of a phone company equipment building into a Drury Inn Suites, the American Can building into a mixed use development, a former New Orleans public service bus barn into a Whole Foods grocery store, a furniture store into a Volunteers of American residence home, a foundry site into an Albertson's grocery store, a cinder block plant into a university arts center, a former school into a homeless shelter, a department store into a mixed commercial and residential development, and a wide range of industrial, commercial and gas service station redevelopments.

To achieve these results, the city has created several governmental and community-based organizations. These organizations provide the institutional support needed to identify brownfield sites, assess their potential for redevelopment and promote the redevelopment by building city and community supports and by attracting private reinvestment funds. The two principal institutional supports include the Mayor's Office of Environmental Affairs (OEA) and the New Orleans Brownfields Consortium.

Mayor's Office of Environmental Affairs

The Mayor's Office of Environmental Affairs (OEA), which coordinates brown-field activity for the city, was established in 1994. The Office focuses on enhancing and

protecting the city's environment and promoting economic development that benefits the environment. Its major activities focus on public education, community involvement in resolving environmental issues, policy development, and broad-based initiatives, of which brownfield redevelopment is the most prominent. Other initiatives include climate protection, environmental justice, and preservation of coastal, river and wetland resources.

The Mayor's Office of Environmental Affairs (OEA) in turn, provides the institutional base for brownfield renewal efforts. The OEA focuses on three major activities,¹ including:

- *Maintaining a database of sites:* New Orleans maintains one of the country's largest brownfield inventories. Based on a series of initial community meetings, criteria developed by the New Orleans Brownfields Consortium's efforts, and ongoing reviews, OEA uses a ranking system to prioritize sites for redevelopment based on community need, economic development potential, and funding availability. The database currently includes 286 sites. New sites are added based on the criteria developed by the Consortium. The OEA also works with the City Planning Commission to map brownfield sites using the City's Geographic Information System (GIS). The GIS links brownfield data to information about census tract demographics, roads, Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization areas, and special taxing districts.
- *Assessing the sites:* OEA determines ownership and tax records on brownfield properties. This information is used to gain access to the site for environmental assessments and to determine property values for potential investors. OEA also facilitates environmental site assessments (ESAs) on priority sites, at times using EPA grant monies to cover ESAs conducted by other agencies (e.g., the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) or local environmental consultants.
- *Facilitating remediation and redevelopment:* The City of New Orleans uses the Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, provided as a grant from EPA and managed by Bank One Louisiana, to provide developers with low interest remediation loans. The loans are used to support redevelopment efforts.

The New Orleans Brownfields Consortium

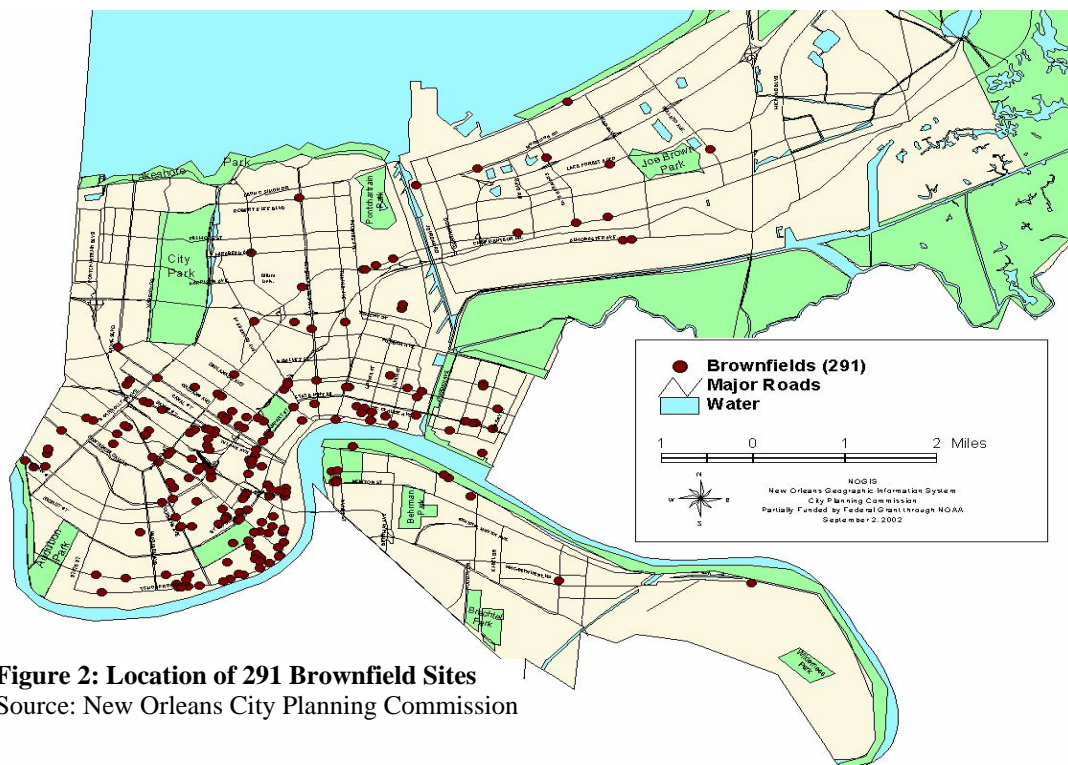
Shortly after opening its office, the OEA created the New Orleans Brownfields Consortium to provide community and private sector focus to revitalization efforts in the city. The Consortium consisted of 37 members, including eighteen community representatives nominated by community organizations, two environmental justice experts, and seventeen government, university and private sector specialists, including nine focused on economic development and eight on environmental remediation. "Rather than viewing Brownfields revitalization as an arena where a choice must be made between business interests or neighborhood concerns," the OEA characterized "the New

¹ City of New Orleans, Mayor's Office of Environmental Affairs. At <http://www.gcr1.com/epa/pilot-cities/default.cfm?ObjID=4983>, accessed on May 20, 2005.

Orleans project” as “a forum for helping both of these constituencies achieve their goals.”²

The Consortium and OEA designed and implemented an extensive community outreach effort. For five months in 1996, the Consortium held eleven town meetings focused on the issue of brownfields. The Consortium also incorporated the perspectives and expertise of the development community and environmental professionals. Universities throughout the New Orleans area, particularly the University of New Orleans (Center for Brownfields Initiatives), Tulane University (Public Law Center and Environmental Law Clinic) and Xavier University (Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and the Brownfields Minority Worker Training Program), actively participated in the Consortium. These groups worked with the community representatives to identify and prioritize the brownfields sites.

Because of this outreach effort, the Consortium was able to rely extensively on community knowledge to create an extensive list of possible brownfield sites, to identify specific sites ripe for revitalization, and to create site-specific reuse options.³ During the town meetings themselves, 167 sites were identified as possible brownfields. The Consortium was later able to further develop and refine this list, to identify almost 300 potential redevelopment sites.



² New Orleans Mayor's Office of Environmental Affairs. 1996. "The New Orleans Brownfields Inventory Year One: Final Report—Part I: An Overview."

³ John Byrne and Raymond P. Scattone. "The Brownfields Challenge: Environmental Justice and Community Participation Lessons Learned from National Brownfields Pilot Projects" (Center for Energy and Environmental Policy, University of Delaware; presented at Brownfields 2000 - Research and Regionalism: Revitalizing the American Community, October, 2000, Atlantic City, New Jersey).

The Consortium actively sought to resolve obstacles to brownfields redevelopment. The Consortium promoted education programs for citizens and investors concerning the nature of brownfields and issues of redevelopment and liability. The Consortium sponsored legislation designed to promote brownfields redevelopment, and then, based on legislation passed at the state and local level, entered into the Louisiana Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) and created local tax incentives targeting brownfields. The Consortium also coordinated city departments, including the Chief Administrative Office, Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development, Safety & Permits, Economic Development and Real Estate, regarding their role in brownfields redevelopment, and obtained a Federal Empowerment Zone designation.⁴

The Consortium participation process, while not formally designed to deal with environmental justice issues, nonetheless provided a good framework for those issues to be addressed. With eighteen citizens and the two environmental justice representatives (from the Xavier Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund), a majority of the Consortium members were linked to neighborhood concerns. The Consortium sought to create a partnership between community and environmental revitalization interests and private investment interests. As noted in a study of environmental justice and community participation in brownfield pilot projects, the City promoted a strong partnership model based on community-based planning in order to ensure investors and lenders that neighborhood residents supported brownfield redevelopment. Sites were selected for proactive City support during the town meetings and in Consortium meetings in part based on community interest in reuse. The City then marketed brownfield sites by providing detailed characteristics for each site, including the neighboring community's ideas for revitalization and redevelopment incentives provided by different levels of government (and coordinated through the Consortium). Thus, gaining community support was seen as critical to gaining private sector confidence in revitalization efforts.⁵

Community Participation in New Orleans

Significant participation in brownfields redevelopment built upon existing community organizations. In particular, New Orleans has a strong network of faith-based organizations that work directly with neighborhoods around issues of education and community building. In New Orleans, the New Orleans Interfaith Sponsoring Committee (NOISC) initiated and sustained an active outreach program called All Congregations Together (ACT). The Committee and ACT sought to address the obstacles of powerlessness, apathy, fear and hopelessness pervasive in communities by “reinvolving” people in the public environment and assisting in their growth as they learn the art of effective citizenship and self-help. ACT believed that change begins with “the active and broad-based participation of a city's people engaging in the art of effective citizenship.” and its broad goals included:

⁴ Derrick L. Coley, “Brownfields Report: The City of New Orleans: A Jewel on the Gulf Coast,” April 1, 2002 U. S. Mayor Articles, at http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/us_mayor_newspaper/documents/04_01_02/brownfields_new_orleans.asp

⁵ John Byrne, ed., “The Brownfields Challenge: A Survey of Environmental Justice and Community Participation Initiatives among Ten National Brownfield Pilot Projects” A report of the University of Delaware Center for Energy and Environmental Policy, May 1999.

- “transcending income, race and ethnic differences
- collaborating with local public and private institutions for the common good of the community to assist in the creation of solutions to key community problems
- providing the historically disenfranchised a seat at the decision making table where their political, economic and social future is debated
- challenging the politicians to become more imaginative, responsive, effective and accountable
- serving as a catalyst in the development of similar organizations”⁶

ACT is comprised of more than 20 congregation-based groups. Community organizing by ACT groups is based on values that emerge from faith traditions, especially values associated with justice, decency, and peace. Together with NOISC, ACT helped identify critical community issues by engaging in conversations with congregations and communities and conducting "one-on-one listening campaigns". Working with concerns that cut across a variety of constituents, ACT sought consensus on the nature of and interventions for resolving the issue.⁷

Facilitation during the Early Years

Effective management of the interaction between the Office of Environmental Affairs (OEA), members of the Consortium, residents and the redevelopment community required considerable skill and focus on process. When OEA first conceived of the community outreach effort, OEA personnel had little capacity to plan or implement the process. The OEA director had little time to focus on brownfields, and no staff was assigned to brownfields on a permanent basis. The OEA director was a lawyer and former head of the Department of Sanitation. The Deputy Director was a consultant.

In early 1995, when the outreach effort began, toxics were highly visible in the community. The chemical industry in and around New Orleans and superfund sites had both attracted considerable attention. The city had a wide range of civic leaders who were concerned with issues of toxics, but few knew much about brownfields. In addition, since residents tend to stay in neighborhoods for many years, civic leaders often had good institutional knowledge of the city, with long memories of what worked in the past, and what did not.

To work effectively in this environment, OEA needed a facilitator that would be credible in the neighborhoods and with civic leaders. Not knowing how to find one, OEA placed a classified ad in the local paper. The office had little idea about who might respond, but was looking for someone who could work with diverse groups, and who knew New Orleans and its neighborhoods. Out of this RFQ process, OEA selected Sandra Gunner to design and manage the process.

⁶ Diane J. Johnson and Pamela Zappardino, *Community Organizing: Innovation and Effectiveness in Building Community Capacities, Leveraging Community Resources and Facilitating Civic Engagement*, Presented at the 5th International Conference of The International Society of Third-Sector Research, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa, July 2002, p. 12.

⁷ Johnson and Zappardino, *ibid.* at 12.

Sandra was not a professional facilitator. Rather, her background was in government. She had been a grants manager for the city in the 1970s, at times working in large groups around issues of desegregation. In the 1980s, she moved to state government, in the Departments of Education and Economic Development. Finally, in 1989 she started her own consulting firm in public relations and marketing. While she had taken a few facilitation courses, facilitation was not a primary focus of her work. Her previous facilitation experience was limited to work with the City Planning Commission, managing public meetings for land use plan revisions.

To better prepare for managing the community outreach meetings, Sandra did a lot of homework. In particular, she traveled to Oakland, California to take a one week course in *Mediating Environmental Disputes* with Scott McCreary, Principal and Co-Founder of CONCUR, an environmental and public policy mediation group. It is here that she developed a more formal knowledge of mediation and facilitation. In particular, she learned how to plan out meeting agendas, develop groundrules, and manage the meetings.

The facilitation position was funded by the original EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilot. Originally contracted for a nine month period, Sandra was hired to help establish and facilitate the Brownfields Consortium, as well as plan and manage the community outreach effort. While about half of the members of the Consortium had been contacted before she came on board, Sandra completed the process of outreach to community



Figure 3: Four Brownfields: Lincoln Beach, Venus Gardens, Chartres Street, and a Power Generator

groups by personally contacting heads of neighborhood and civic associations.

The first meeting of the Consortium, in April 1996, focused on the purpose of the Brownfields Assessment Pilot, goals and milestones, and how the Consortium might proceed. The group had lots of questions about brownfields, EPA, federal regulations and other aspects of the problem. Expectations about Sandra's role as facilitator and their role as participants were explored. The group also explored their skepticism that consensus might be possible and their initial distrust of the city, who was seen as controlling the process. The Office of Environmental Affairs agreed to let the group set their own process management and decision making groundrules. These groundrules were established through negotiation during the second meeting in May.

By June, the Consortium was meeting biweekly. This schedule was difficult for members, but enthusiasm was high both because the pace of the project allowed them to see a beginning and an end to it, and because each member was learning so much. Participation was high.

The community outreach forums were planned in June and initiated in July. The Consortium and OEA located meetings in each of the five City Council Districts, with two districts split to bring focus to the West Bank and to the city core based on census information and citizen input collected from a survey. These seven groups met in two sets of meetings, with 40 or 50 participants showing up at each of the first set and 15 to 20 at each of the second set.

The first meeting provided an overview of brownfields, the purpose of the brownfields assessment pilot, and the role of the Consortium in the assessment process. Participants were asked to identify potential brownfield sites. Many residents had lived in the neighborhood long enough to remember what had been on vacant lots. One hundred and seventy-three sites were identified as potential brownfield sites through this process.

In addition to placing public notices in a city newspaper before each meeting, outreach personnel promoted participation by developing a brochure and a flyer for public distribution, by writing to or meeting with a wide range of philanthropic groups and community organizations, and by mailing 1,228 letters to potentially interested citizens.

In July and August, the Consortium met twice to develop criteria for prioritizing redevelopment sites. Criteria included site characteristics, such as perceived contamination and the condition of any structures on the site, and contextual characteristics, such as linkages to transportation and adjacency to a school or other businesses. Members of the Consortium individually rated each site using a scale of 1 to 10 based on the criteria developed. Consortium members interviewed their neighbors to help in rating the properties. Based on individual ratings, the Consortium as a group then ranked the properties. The initial list of 173 sites was first narrowed to 30 and then to 15 sites.

While requiring lengthy discussions, the process was not particularly controversial. The Consortium had built trust around a reasonably objective process that identified sites and assessed which sites were most viable for redevelopment. While political issues did become a focus for discussion, political support for the process was

clearly demonstrated by both the Office of Environmental Affairs and the mayor, who came to the last meeting to congratulate the group.

In addition to managing the meetings, Sandra gathered information needed for the meetings. For example, real estate records for sites identified during the initial community meetings had to be physically located. Records from the Office of Convenience and Records were scattered across many different sites and were not computerized. The data was needed if the Consortium was to effectively develop priorities for redevelopment. As a second example, the sites were photographed so that everyone would have a visual image of the site to accompany the general descriptions written for the database being developed. The constant work of keeping members informed fell to the facilitator.

The second set of community meetings, held in September, presented the findings for discussion. The Consortium's rankings, with profiles, were placed into reserve at all libraries, with press releases and press conferences highlighting the outcomes of the process.

The Consortium process worked remarkably well, with a high degree of transparency and integrity. The citizen members felt empowered and therefore acted responsibly. The expertise of each member, whether a technical specialist or a community member, was recognized. Assertive and vocal personalities were given voice, but not at the expense of other members. Consequently, the early skepticism gave way to productive work.

Originally designed to end in October, the Consortium was extended for six months, as was the facilitator's contract. The group turned their attention toward developing a strategic plan for redevelopment, including strategies for marketing the high priority sites and for managing the list of priority sites over time.

In 1999, following completion of the New Orleans process, the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) designed a similar process for the parishes surrounding New Orleans. The RPC created the Southeast Louisiana Regional Brownfields Consortium with three or four citizen representatives from each of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany Parishes, and other governmental and technical experts. The Consortium had a similar mission to the one conducted in New Orleans, and hired Sandra to facilitate this process as well. However, given the geographic size of the RPC region, the process was both less detailed and more political. Eight community forums were held in the various parishes during 2000, but profiles were not developed for each site identified. Research into the sites was conducted by planning directors of each parish and each parish separately ranked their sites. The priorities were submitted as reports to the Parish Councils and priorities were finalized and approved by the Councils.

Facilitation during More Recent Years

With the Consortium assessment and strategic planning process completed, the Office of Environmental Affairs faced the more difficult task of remediating the high priority sites identified. At the same time, with Sandra Gunner's departure, the OEA no longer had personnel specifically devoted to brownfields redevelopment. What was needed now was not an individual who could facilitate large, city-wide community



processes, but rather someone who could package redevelopment deals by bringing a wide range of stakeholders together, including community residents, lenders, owners, developers and city officials. The US EPA, Region 6, filled this gap by hiring Nathan Champagne through the National Older Worker Career

Figure 3: American Can Company, Before....

... And After

Center⁸ and assigning him to New Orleans. Nathan started in October of 1988. Coming out of a career of real estate with an interest in both environmental issues and politics, he already had developed a network in the brownfield arena and knew most of the players.

Unlike Sandra, Nathan worked by bringing small groups of stakeholders

together, often talking to them one-on-one. Using breakfast meetings to alleviate fears and clarify options, he would explain how various voluntary cleanup programs worked, help owners make insurance claims and manage issues of liability, and promote problem solving whenever possible. Nathan also linked property owners up with community residents. This was particularly necessary when federal funds were used in the



⁸ see NOWCC.org

environmental assessments or clean up, since such programs require community outreach efforts.

The particular set of stakeholders involved in any particular project varied widely, depending on whether the site was vacant or occupied, whether structures were historic or not, whether the site was publicly or privately owned, the scale and difficulty of the proposed redevelopment, the degree of community concern over the existing or proposed use, what financial arrangements could be packaged, etc. Of the 43 sites from the brownfields database that have been rehabilitated to date, many posed difficult and unique challenges. Several of the past or ongoing projects were quite substantial, involving considerable stakeholder participation in the process of redevelopment. Two projects can be used to illustrate the range of ongoing challenges facing brownfield coordinators in cities such as New Orleans: the American Can Building and the Saratoga Street Incinerator site, and the role of facilitation in resolving these challenges.

The American Can redevelopment site was one of New Orleans earliest and most significant redevelopment projects. Formerly a canning facility, the 6.6 acre site was redeveloped into 268 residential apartments, 20,000 sq. ft. of commercial and retail space, workout facilities, including a pool, and parking for these activities. Project costs totaled \$44 million, with five percent for environmental abatement, 25 percent for structural and major system rehabilitation, and the remainder for project development and marketing. The costs were financed as follows: 66 percent from tax exempt bonds, 18 percent from historic tax credits, 11 percent from a HUD second mortgage, and the remainder from a HUD BEDI grant and an Economic Development Loan.⁹ With strong community support for the project, the OEA's primary focus was on packaging a deal acceptable to lenders, owners and developers, while maintaining the urban design benefits of the project.

The Saratoga Street Incinerator site is ongoing and considerably more complicated. Bounded on two sides by residences and the remaining sides by a cemetery, the site housed a city trash incinerator until the 1970s. The facility was demolished by the late '80s, and an eight-inch concrete slab was laid over the facility footprint. The site was then used as a playground and basketball court until a 1998 study revealed that the remaining soils that surrounded the facility were contaminated with asbestos and lead. The city fenced off the site, thereby creating a significant eyesore in the middle of the neighborhood.

Members of All Congregations Together (ACT) worked with city officials to search for another solution. Long-term memories of the living with the stench and soot of the incinerator mixed with the current concerns over public health and safety to create a volatile climate. Environmental justice issues were also significant in a community that is 99 percent African American. Meetings concerned with the site go back to the mid 1990s.

In this climate, progress has been slow. ACT, community residents and city officials met a dozen times over an eighteen month period in 2000 and 2001. With a grant from the US EPA, The Public Law Center (TPLC) of Tulane and Loyola Law Schools

⁹ Derrick L. Coley, Brownfields Report: The City of New Orleans: A Jewel on the Gulf Coast, April 1, 2002 U. S. Mayor Articles, at http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/us_mayor_newspaper/documents/04_01_02/brownfields_new_orleans.asp

convened and facilitated the Cleanup Dialogue Committee Meetings. The process was largely driven by the community. The City and the community developed a shared plan for redevelopment into a community center, but the process was slowed by a lack of financing for the plan.¹⁰

While the community was encouraged by the city's efforts to seek funding for clean up of the site, remediation has been slow. Environmental assessments were completed in May, 2004, and Mayor Nagin announced plans of the Friends of NORD (Friends of the New Orleans Recreational Department) to convert the site into a community basketball facility. The nonprofit can apply for cleanup funds, while the city cannot because it is the party responsible for the contamination. The City submitted a Risk Evaluation Corrective Action Plan (RECAP) to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality in August. US EPA funded the \$90,000 RECAP evaluation with a supplemental brownfield grant. The slow progress has in turn reduced the potential of dialogue-based processes and promoted a more activist involvement by community civic leaders. Yet the underlying willingness of the community and the city to work together remains, despite these challenges.

Conclusions

More so than most cities, New Orleans has worked to build its capacity to redevelopment brownfield sites. These efforts have consistently garnered a high degree of political leadership, manifested both as organizational support for the Office of Environmental Affairs (OEA) and the active involvement of elected officials in brownfields efforts. This leadership in turn has enabled city officials to secure external funding for assessment and redevelopment efforts, and to leverage that funding to staff redevelopment activities.

In particular, the choice to hire a facilitator as the first OEA staff member who focused exclusively on brownfields efforts grew from a clear sense of the need to build community support for redevelopment efforts. The choice of a local facilitator with considerable political experience, and her subsequent commitment to obtain more complete training in facilitation, created a unique mix of skills. The local facilitator became deeply involved in the entire process of the community assessment and strategic planning process, often going well beyond meeting management and conflict resolution. She served as both facilitator and staff to the community process. This high degree of proactive problem-solving, coupled to a clear sense of purpose and process management, enabled the community to work effectively together. This in turn built considerable trust and willingness to work through differences. This trust, while stressed by a slower rate of progress as the city seeks to redevelop more difficult sites, continues to be manifest in both the community and in public agencies.

¹⁰ Amanda Furness, "Local group pushes for site redevelopment" The Louisiana Weekly, October 15, 2001 at <http://www.louisianaweekly.com/cgi-bin/weekly/news/articlegate.pl?20011015h>

Appendix E

Case Study: Locally Initiated Facilitation Project East Palo Alto, CA

Introduction

In 1992, brownfield re-development seemed a distant vision to the residents of East Palo Alto. As the per capita “murder capitol” of the United States and in the face of rampant drug trafficking, East Palo Alto struggled with basic issues of public safety and poverty. Newly incorporated in 1983, the city also sought to build community and identity. It is in the light of these difficulties that the city’s ability to identify and redevelop brownfields, and to use this redevelopment to promote its core social and political objectives, is particularly noteworthy.

To appreciate fully the East Palo Alto brownfields redevelopment effort, it is important to understand the longstanding racial and political dynamics of the community. East Palo Alto is a small community adjacent to Palo Alto and Menlo Park, bordered on the east by the San Francisco Bay and on the west primarily by the Bayshore Freeway (US 101). It is located at the west end of the Dumbarton Bridge, the southernmost bridge crossing the Bay.

Migration following World War II led to rapid suburbanization of the area. Its population of 1,500 in 1947 grew eightfold by 1953. Since the area was less desirable for housing than the foothills to the west, the area emerged as a prime location for lower income housing. Residents soon felt marginalized from their wealthier neighbors.

As an unincorporated area, East Palo Alto lacked both the community identity and civic infrastructure necessary to represent the interests of its residents. Public policy choices created additional problems. Menlo Park annexed Belle Haven in 1949 and thereby removed about one-quarter of the area’s population and property value. The



Figure 1: Map of East Palo Alto
<http://www.pluggedin.org/about/environment.html>

construction of the Bayshore Freeway in the mid-1950's further isolated the area residents.

In addition, racially motivated, discriminative real estate practices resulted in targeting East Palo Alto as the prime location for people of color. By 1960, restrictive covenants in many surrounding areas led to three-quarters of the African American population in San Mateo County residing in or adjacent to East Palo Alto. During the next decade, whites migrated out of the area. From 1960 to 1970 the white population decreased from 10,170 (68%) to 5,574 (31%), while the African American population grew from 2,291 (15%) to 10,846 (61%).

During the 1960's, East Palo Alto became a leading center of the Black Power movement. This clearly altered how outsiders viewed the community and how residents viewed their own community. At least one researcher has attributed this movement to creating an identity within the community as an “Afro-centric enclave committed to black nationalism and self-determination.”¹

In response to the federal War on Poverty, several community organizations emerged during the late 1960's. Some of these organizations were closely tied to the Black Power movement, while others held a more “moderate” perspective. East Palo Alto residents developed a variety of perspectives related to the desirability of incorporating East Palo Alto into a city, as well as redevelopment of the community. Various factions within the community sought incorporation for fifteen more years before succeeding. Even then, in June 1983, incorporation passed by a mere 15 votes. The community was so divided that a lawsuit was filed challenging the equality and fairness of community representation, ultimately being resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court. Despite the divisiveness over incorporation, many nonetheless felt the community had achieved a level of self-determination for the first time.

But further changes were on the way. During the 1990's, the Latino population in East Palo Alto increased more than 100 percent, adding more than 8,800 residents. This was coupled with a decrease in the African American population by more than 2,500. Even with this transition, however, African American leadership remained intact.

The battle over incorporation largely continued in early efforts at community redevelopment. The newly incorporated community could exert more influence over its future but was neither economically viable nor sustainable. With tax revenues only a small fraction of those in nearby Palo Alto and Menlo Park, this fledgling city realized it needed to dramatically increase revenues. For many community leaders, the answer was economic development. In fact, many felt economic development was the very key to survival of East Palo Alto. But initial development efforts further divided the community.

First, in the late 1980's, a parcel tax was proposed. The tax was opposed by many of the same people who opposed incorporation. A lawsuit followed, and the tax was declared unconstitutional. Next, divisions emerged around whether to support local community economic development efforts or the recruitment of outside economic development interests who could bring capital into the community.

This conflict over economic development was clearly observed in 1987 and 1988, when two major projects capitalized by outside interests were proposed. One was intended to transform the “Whiskey Gulch” area, the other the Ravenswood Industrial Park. The Whiskey Gulch initiative was opposed by many in the area concerned with displacement and increased traffic, and those concerned with affordable housing and jobs for members of the community. The Ravenswood initiative was opposed by two council members and a group of property owners who would be displaced by the project. Both projects were halted after extensive efforts to make them work.

¹ Michael J. Berman, Race, Ethnicity and Inter-minority Suburban Politics: East Palo Alto, 1950 - 2002, Graduate Seminar Research Paper, Department of History, Stanford University, May 2002

This turn of events left East Palo Alto with the growing perception that it was not “development-friendly.” For those supporting locally generated economic growth this was a victory. But for those who felt an infusion of outside capital was necessary to pull the city out of its financial woes, this was a major setback. Now in the early 1990's, nearly a decade after the city was incorporated, many problems still faced the city. Without new revenues for funding needed programs, the city was making little progress.

By 1992, with East Palo Alto now the murder capital of the nation and economic development virtually non-existent, the community was finally demanding change. Following elections recently over, this message was heard by the newly-elected City Council. The new City council members held a retreat later hailed as a watershed event, as council members committed to setting aside “personal and political differences for the good of the community.”



Figure 2: Aerial Photo of East Palo Alto
US Geologic Survey at terraserver.microsoft.com

The Gateway/101 redevelopment project, submitted but lying dormant since 1989, received renewed interest in early 1993. With a new mindset that sought to work out and resolve differences, the project was approved. The project broke ground in 1995, bringing in two major tenants (Home Depot and Office Depot) to the retail mall, and providing needed housing. This was followed in 1997 with City Council approving a renewed attempt to re-develop the Whiskey Gulch/University Center area. The corner had been turned.

Brownfields Redevelopment Initiative - Ravenswood Industrial Park

In the midst of this new attitude about economic development, there remained animosity and distrust among some members of the community. A major issue that remained, despite the two new developments along US 101, was what to do with the Ravenswood area to the east.

In 1995 and 1996, city officials also began re-considering options for the Ravenswood Business District. Since the late 1980's, when Sun Microsystems expressed an interest, the Ravenswood area had been considered a prime candidate for economic development. But distrust of and by Ravenswood's primarily white business owners presented a potential barrier to re-developing the area.

Enter Sherry Nikzat. As a small city with limited funds, East Palo Alto did not have the financial capability to hire the personnel necessary to undertake many functions typically provided by city government. Looking for various avenues to fund re-development, the city had applied to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to become a national brownfields pilot project. Its application was denied.

In many respects, however, this became a blessing in disguise. Responding to the city's need for assistance identified during a federal summit convened by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, EPA Region 9 (based in San Francisco) decided to fund a federal liaison position for the city. Through an Interagency Personnel Assignment (IPA), Sherry Nikzat was assigned from her position in EPA to assist the city of East Palo Alto. Reporting directly to the city manager she was in a position to affect change. And she carried the clout of being a representative of EPA.

Ms. Nikzat's primary area of responsibility was to help facilitate redevelopment, and more specifically, brownfields redevelopment. The Ravenswood area seemed to be a prime location, but several issues stood in the way. First, distrust still existed amongst community residents, property owners and elected officials. Second, little interest seemed to exist for redevelopment of this area. Third, the community lacked a way to decide whether and how to proceed with redeveloping Ravenswood.

Another critical development occurred about this time. EPA Region 9 awarded East Palo Alto what was perhaps the first "regional" Brownfield Pilot. Funding to support brownfields redevelopment came not from the national headquarters of EPA but from the region. Although the application to become a national brownfields pilot had been rejected a couple years earlier, EPA Region 9 felt East Palo Alto represented a good investment of brownfields redevelopment funds.

Funding as a regional pilot project was an important catalyst to redevelopment. It provided funds for additional technical analyses to characterize Ravenswood as a brownfield site and quantify potential clean-up costs. It also provided funds to hire an experienced facilitator to design and convene a community stakeholder consensus process focused on redevelopment of the Ravenswood area. These initiatives allowed the city to address what heretofore had been the two major barriers to redeveloping Ravenswood.

Having received funding as a regional brownfields pilot, with Sherry Nikzat available to assist in seeking other funds for redevelopment, the city then applied once again to EPA headquarters for funds. This time the target was to become a Brownfields Showcase Community. This would allow the city to receive a variety of coordinated federal assistance in pursuing brownfields redevelopment projects, as well as providing additional funding. The good news arrived in March 1998. East Palo Alto was selected as one of the original sixteen Brownfields Showcase Communities.

There was one other important piece to this puzzle. During the Sun Microsystems redevelopment inquiry in the late 1980's, a cost of approximately \$30 million was cited to remediate the brownfields associated with Ravenswood. This created a formidable barrier to redevelopment. But in an attempt to evaluate the basis for this figure, the Regional Water Quality Control Board reviewed the environmental assessment. It found to the delight of many in the community that the clean-up costs were more in the neighborhood of \$2 to \$5 million. This removed a critical barrier to redeveloping Ravenswood.

Profile of the Brownfields Redevelopment Site

The Ravenswood Industrial Area, also known as the Ravenswood Business District, is comprised of approximately 80 acres on the east side of East Palo Alto



adjacent to the San Francisco Bay. An additional 36 acres surrounding the site is protected wetlands and designated open space. Cooley Landing lies to the east, at the end of Bay Road which cuts through the area. This area has been cited by some in the region as the most underused and underdeveloped tract of land in the entire ten-county San Francisco Bay area.

Figure 3: Wetlands Adjacent to Ravenswood, with Romic in the background.

The Ravenswood Industrial Area contains an interesting mix of industrial and manufacturing facilities, some of which have been in operation for more than 70 years. Several auto dismantling facilities (aka junkyards) are located there as well as light manufacturing, chemical processing, charter bus, welding and Asian noodle production facilities, among others.



Figure 4: Traditional Industries in Ravenswood

Two facilities in particular, however, have had a large impact on the redevelopment of the area. From 1926 to 1964, Chipman Chemical Company operated a facility on Bay Road producing arsenic-based products such as pesticides. Although this facility is now owned by Rhone-Poulenc, during its last several years of operation the facility was leased by Catalytica, which designed and manufactured chemical catalysts. This facility continued to operate until as recently as mid-2002, when Catalytica closed its operations.

Tests conducted as early as 1981 indicated elevated levels of arsenic in shallow groundwater and soil on and adjacent to the property. This was probably caused by spillage when transferring arsenic from railcars to underground mixing tanks, as well as from the deposition of manufacturing wastes into a sludge pond.

Fortunately, the potential risks to public health and the environment were considered low. Nonetheless, clean-up was required and various measures have been

taken as part of remediating the site. These include land swaps to re-create lost tidal marshlands, soil removal, treatment and immobilization, and planting trees which take-up arsenic. This work began in the early 1990's and continues to this day.

The other facility in the Ravenswood district which has generated a high degree of oversight and controversy is the Romic Environmental Technologies Recycling Facility. This facility recycles solvents and other hazardous materials. It has operated for many years, much to the dismay of many community residents. The facility has taken extensive steps to involve community residents and inform the community of its operations, yet has had occasional spills or mishaps which heighten concerns about the facility.



Figure 5: Catalytica

Since Romic operated at the site before more restrictive environmental and land use regulations were in effect, the facility was “grandfathered,” meaning it does not need



Figure 6: Concrete plant in Ravenswood

to comply with some current regulations. On the other hand, the facility is a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Subtitle B facility, which means it must comply with RCRA regulations. Given current environmental and land use regulations, it is unlikely the facility would be able to re-locate despite efforts by some local groups encouraging relocation.

In essence, with the exception of the Rhone-Poulenc and Romic facilities, the Ravenswood Industrial Park proved to be a fairly low-level brownfields site. With a modest amount of clean-up, the site offered many possibilities for re-development. The continued existence of the two chemical facilities would probably prove the major deterrent to full-scale economic development of the area.

Initiating the Facilitation Process

With this as the backdrop, Sherry Nikzat realized early in her tenure that efforts were needed to move beyond the impasse created by differing perceptions about what should be done with Ravenswood. The community held a wide variety of perspectives about how to redevelop the area. The business owners in the District, however, were fairly united in their views. They wanted to play a central role in planning its redevelopment.



Figure 7: Ravenswood Site

In the early 1990's, Ravenswood business owners became concerned that the proposal by Sun Microsystems was tantamount to displacement. Had Sun been successful in obtaining sufficient support from City Council, the entire District could have been subject to eminent domain. Faced with this threat, the business owners created the Industrial Development and Employment Association (IDEA). They felt only with their combined efforts through such an organization could their interests be properly protected.

As a result of this early effort to redevelop Ravenswood, the business owners were skeptical and concerned about new talk of redevelopment in the mid-1990's. At the same time, some City leaders were still angry at the property owners for their role in defeating the Sun initiative. And many in the community were distrustful about how the predominantly white business owners would approach redevelopment, concerned that the owners would not have the larger interests of the community in mind. Some in the community went so far as to consider the business owners in their community as a form of “foreign occupation,” whose only concern was profits.

Sherry Nikzat knew these concerns had to be addressed and resolved if the city was to succeed in stimulating community redevelopment, particularly in Ravenswood. She was certain the lack of trust, ongoing skepticism and ineffective communication among members of the community, the City Council and the Ravenswood property owners would once again lead to gridlock. A new approach was needed.

In 1997, Ms. Nikzat convinced city leaders that a multi-stakeholder, collaborative process was necessary to deal with the redevelopment of Ravenswood. But there were

many barriers to this as well, and unless the community at-large could get behind this approach, the process and the prospects for redevelopment would certainly stall again. City leaders concurred.

Now, crucial to success was finding the right facilitator for the job, to bring needed credibility to the process. City leaders felt it was important to have a facilitator with “no political agenda.” On the other hand, the community was somewhat wary of “outsiders” who lacked understanding of the city’s unique history.

For the sake of legitimacy of the process, it was crucial that the facilitator not be aligned with any of the other major interest groups in the city. He or she could certainly not be linked with the business community. Furthermore, as a highly diverse community, a “person of color” was determined to be best suited for the job. The selected facilitator was certain to be highly scrutinized for fairness and trustworthiness.

At this point, the City circulated a Request for Proposals asking for facilitators to assist East Palo Alto in conducting this stakeholder process. To address concerns about who should facilitate the group an advisory panel was established. The panel was comprised of five representatives of the community, including City Council and property owners.

Only one local facilitator indicated interest in the project. But due to political implications, this person withdrew from consideration. The panel then interviewed three facilitators, all from outside the community. Ultimately they selected Mtangulizi Sanyika, an African American based in Oakland with experience working with the East Palo Alto community. His selection was critical to success, as he represented someone who knew the community yet was not tied to any of the major interest groups.

Mr. Sanyika was also a self-avowed community advocate, working with underserved communities to help identify and establish pathways to success. While this position as an “advocate” might have been a limiting factor in many third-party interventions, it actually proved to be an asset in this case. It provided a level of credibility to community members who came into the collaborative effort skeptical of the process. And the business community believed he would still be able to provide an impartial presence.

Description of the Facilitated Brownfields Redevelopment Process

A multi-stakeholder group of approximately fifteen people was established via City Council resolution to consider the issues of redeveloping Ravenswood. The group’s stated purpose was to develop potential scenarios for redeveloping the Ravenswood site. Members of the stakeholder group included representatives of City Council, the City Economic Development office, the Planning Commission, a local community training organization, environmental regulators, financial institutions, local businesses, property owners and community members.

Critical to the make-up of the Committee, however, two local environmental justice organizations elected not to participate. One group after attending the first meeting felt too much of the focus was on economic development, and that they could better serve the community by remaining independent of the process and serving as an “environmental justice watch-dog.” The other group chose not to participate because it

felt the process would not adequately represent the interests of the African American community, and that those involved would likely be co-opted.

This issue of cooptation and legitimacy is a concern often voiced by individuals or groups which have historically been “left out” of decision making processes. Also, some felt that participating in a dialogue with the business community, or other groups with a different set of values and interests, might suggest a willingness to abandon their own values and interests. This provided a real challenge to the facilitator and the remaining participants in the process to ensure legitimacy and inclusion of the wide range of perspectives held in the community. If the process was not successful in accomplishing this, its results would have little value.

It is essential to note that other environmental justice advocates continued to participate in the process. They believed they could hold fast to their values and perhaps find some solutions which would benefit the community. Their participation was crucial to success. Had all environmental justice issues withdrawn, the legitimacy of the process rightfully would have been undermined.

In addition, one of the key participants in the process was a City Council member, who was also the past Mayor and current Chair of the city’s Redevelopment Agency. She was more skeptical of the likelihood of success than concerned with the legitimacy of the process. But even with some questions about the process, she felt it represented the best opportunity for finding needed solutions for the betterment of the community.

Unlike some brownfields redevelopment projects where use of a facilitator is an afterthought, or considered only when the process is stalled (as in the San Diego case), this process began with the facilitator being selected by a cross-section of stakeholders before any meetings were convened. Having the stakeholders involved in the selection of the facilitator was strategically important, as this added an essential element of credibility. Given the suspicions about each other, as well as the proposed stakeholder process, everything that could be done to add credibility and legitimacy needed to be done.

Some involved in the process were ready to move forward before Mr. Sanyika was hired. But the group was urged, and decided, to slow down and wait for the facilitator to be selected. Given the political dynamics, and the uncertainty about how this project would work, this proved to be a wise decision. The facilitator was present from the first meeting until the completion of the process. The adage of “go slow now to be able to go faster later” was validated by participants in the process.

The stakeholder consensus process itself was quite intense. For a nine-month period beginning in 1997, the group met at least twice monthly, typically for three hours each time. As noted, when the process began there was little faith that it could work. And there were numerous indicators that would have led most people to this conclusion.

Importantly, the facilitator did not have the opportunity to conduct a “convening assessment.” The group was anxious to move forward, the funds were limited, and city leadership had a sense of how they wanted the process to proceed. Mr. Sanyika noted this added to an already challenging situation. He had little opportunity to prepare as he

normally would prior to initiating a collaborative process, particularly one characterized by this level of complexity.

Ultimately, as another measure of the challenge he faced, even without conducting an assessment he expended many more hours than the funds allowed. In addition to limited funding, established deadlines added even more pressure on participants and Mr. Sanyika. The process had to keep moving and be completed in less than a year.

On top of this, participants brought uneven skills into the process. Some were not familiar with planning terminology and some were not well versed in negotiation. This tended to slow the process down. Moreover, stakeholder representatives, in particular from the community, did not necessarily hold the same views, adding to yet another level of complexity to the project.

Given all these dynamics – the lack of trust, doubts about the likelihood of success, uneven knowledge and negotiation skills, and countervailing views within the same stakeholder group – it was perhaps no surprise to encounter one other major challenge. Some participants, particularly within the business community and city, seemed too guarded to really open up to collaborative problem solving. They were not yet ready to openly convey their preferences for fear of what might be done with that information. This hurdle had to be overcome if there was to be any chance of progress, let alone success.

Ultimately, Mr. Sanyika tackled and overcame each of these limitations. He helped the group build trust in the process, and eventually the willingness to share their perspectives on how the site might be redeveloped. He succeeded in creating an environment where the group was willing to explore options and eventually evaluate and select preferences for different redevelopment options.

The result of this process was certainly a surprise to many who both participated in and observed the process. The group identified five possible approaches to redeveloping and reutilizing the land which were then submitted to the Redevelopment Agency for further consideration and action. The Agency was pleased with the range of options, and it appeared that Ravenswood was on its way to being revitalized.

But progress was stalled one more time. Unfortunately for the proponents of redevelopment, a downturn in the economy left the results of the process in limbo. The proposals were shelved until economic conditions became more favorable. Some suspected that the politics were not quite right for moving forward as well.

If the story stopped here, then the turn around in attitudes, the improved relationships and increased trust would have been the only signs of success of the project. But as is often case, this process started a chain of events that led ultimately to the originals goals of the process being achieved.

A year or so passed before an improvement in economic conditions caused the recommendations of the collaborative process to be revisited. At this point, however, the City Manager felt the five alternatives should be evaluated in the context of other redevelopment projects underway in the community. This led to a second collaborative process.

In April 1999, the City began searching for an urban design team to help craft redevelopment options which connected Ravenswood to the Gateway and University Circle projects. This collaborative design process eventually was comprised of several community workshops or charrettes to envision how the three projects might best be tied together. The meetings were well attended by a cross-section of the community, and everyone was given a chance to participate.

At the end of this process, in April 2000, the Revitalization Plan for East Palo



Figure 8: Redevelopment Projects

Alto was unveiled. Its foundations were the primary elements of the original stakeholder process. Arguably the original collaborative process not only paved the way for the Ravenswood Redevelopment Plan but for this larger, more holistic community redevelopment strategy. Redevelopment was now a major component of the economic revitalization of East Palo Alto.

Summary

This case study in East Palo Alto, California, represents a fairly common set of dynamics in many brownfields redevelopment projects. The redevelopment project was in a community where environmental justice concerns were, and remain, significant. The local government and community members came to realize that the most likely scenario for success was developing multi-stakeholder support for the project. But extensive distrust and poor relationships among the stakeholders acted as a barrier. With no formal “civic infrastructure” to address these problems, and engage the various stakeholders, gridlock characterized the debate about redevelopment.

Another major contribution of the project, through enhanced civic discourse, was the development of social capital within East Palo Alto. Most of those interviewed felt the stakeholder process, and the subsequent public charrettes, made a significant contribution to community-building. The project began with a highly divided community. Many in the community did not trust the motives of the business community, even though most Ravenswood business owners had made long-term investments in the community. Community residents were themselves divided over how to go about community investment and redevelopment. And local politicians were at odds with both

business owners as well as certain segments of the community. Economic investment and redevelopment were at a standstill.

The stakeholder process, however, broke through many of these barriers. It provided a civic infrastructure, a mechanism through which deliberative dialogue on one of the most critical yet divisive issues in the community could be discussed and resolved. It created an opportunity for different factions within the community to come together and work through their differences, and provided a model for community problem solving. And if it could be done with issues of redevelopment and brownfields, why not other issues? The facilitation processes not only developed economic capital, but social capital as well.

Lessons Learned

Most people interviewed as part of this assessment confirmed the value of using a facilitated stakeholder processes. The initial process was considered critical to building trust, positive communication patterns and stronger working relationships. It was hailed as a major breakthrough in community dialogue. It provided a voice for the community in a major economic development initiative.

Several dynamics associated with this process are worth noting and provide some valuable lessons related to the use of facilitated, collaborative process for brownfields redevelopment. To begin, stakeholder participation in selecting the mediator was critical to establishing credibility for the process at a time when trust among various stakeholders was low.

A key city leader recognized the need for a collaborative stakeholder process and an outside facilitator to lead the process, and was an effective champion of the process. This appears to be a common theme among successful facilitated brownfields redevelopment projects around the country. In several cases, the “champions” of collaborative processes left their positions and with them departed the impetus to continue. Most successful redevelopment projects have had an effective local leader at the center of the effort.

Another major issue encountered, also not uncommon, is defining community. Often environmental justice communities are thought of as monolithic in their views. But as this project demonstrated, various perspectives and views about economic development were held by community members. There was not just one point of view or voice which represented the sentiments of the community. Therefore, efforts are needed to assure that sufficient attention is given to the different voices within a community and to not fall prey to oversimplifying the definition of community.

Politics and economics can outweigh the best collaborative processes. As the political balance of power can shift between views about development, likewise the economy can shift in a manner that can affect the redevelopment of brownfields. Timing therefore is critical to success and should be given considerable attention in the course of redevelopment planning efforts.

This project reinforced a key lesson learned observed in San Diego case as well, the need to engage the facilitator early in the process. This project was a well-conceived and planned collaborative process from its inception. The result was a nine-month

process which led to consensus on five potential redevelopment scenarios. Many other redevelopment processes have taken much longer due, at least in part, to underestimating the complexity of planning and convening multi-stakeholder collaborative processes.

This project also highlighted the value of facilitators to help build partnerships and teamwork. Sufficient trust among the parties did not exist at the beginning of the process, resulting in the lack of good communication. This led to misunderstandings. And with the lack of a “neutral” forum, in this case supported by the Environmental Protection Agency, to discuss and resolve their differences, the dynamics of distrust were perpetuated. The facilitated process provided a venue to address these concerns, and the credibility of the facilitator allowed the process to proceed even though the level of trust was low in the beginning.

The value of training and information exchange in collaborative processes was highlighted by the mediator as a beneficial condition for future work. He felt that many of the participants were not able to participate at the same level during the course of the project, and as such a training to help everyone attain some baseline skills in collaborative problem solving would have been helpful. At the same time, having information in a form that can be easily digested and understood is also critical to success.

Slower can be better. Although nine months is not a long period of time for the resolution for major public policy issues, some felt the time expended and number of meetings was longer than needed. Others felt that “going slower” was necessary to establish the foundation for the results that would follow. There was significant concern about litigation arising from the process, but by taking the time for everyone to understand the needs and the implications of various alternatives, litigation was avoided and a set of acceptable alternatives was developed. And although some were disappointed that the original recommendations were shelved for a period of time, many others noted this allowed for a more holistic revitalization plan for the City.

Funding for the collaborative process was identified as a potential limitation to this project. Limited funds were available for the project, and the mediator felt it was a significant constraint on the project. He questioned whether he would undertake such a project again in the future for the funds available. He estimated the actual cost of the project was four to five times higher than the amount available. Adequate appreciation for the work conducted should be reflected in the funds made available for facilitating collaborative processes.

Appendix F

Telephone Surveys: Summary of EPA - Initiated Facilitation Pilot Projects

As discussed previously, of the original twelve Brownfields Facilitation Pilots selected to be part of this assessment, three were chosen for in-depth case studies. The three case studies were Lowell, Massachusetts, EPA Region 1; Shenandoah, Virginia, EPA Region 3; and San Diego, California, EPA Region 9.

This section describes the remaining nine Brownfields Facilitation Pilots. This assessment was based on telephone interviews conducted with key participants in the facilitation processes. In most every case, the EPA Regional Brownfields Coordinator, the lead local project sponsor and the facilitator were interviewed. In many cases, as will be documented below, the original local project sponsors left their positions by the time the assessment was conducted, and additional follow-up was not possible. In other cases, the scope and extent of the facilitator's involvement was such that additional follow-up was not considered necessary.

Four of the twelve Pilots selected by EPA Headquarters were tribal brownfields projects. EPA is conducting more extensive evaluations of these cases as part of separate studies. Nonetheless, they are included briefly in this assessment insofar as they identify or reinforce the broader lessons learned from the series of Facilitation Pilots. While all the Facilitation Pilots were federally initiated, the tribal cases in particular were "recruited" as a means for encouraging tribes to pursue brownfields redevelopment. This process of recruitment had important implications on the facilitation processes, as compared to the non-recruited (locally generated) brownfields facilitation projects discussed in the next section.

Brief summaries of the nine cases assessed using telephone interviews follow, listed by EPA Region.

1. New Bedford, MA - Region 1

Background

New Bedford is one of the largest cities in Massachusetts, with a long history of industrial development. The community has encountered numerous periods of high unemployment and economic downturns, and historically has had much higher poverty rates than the rest of Massachusetts. With over 300 brownfield sites, the city has been faced with significant environmental problems, some resulting in federally-funded remediation activities. As an example, EPA funded a \$120 million clean-up of the Acushnet River and New Bedford Harbor in 1998.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

Differing from most other Brownfields Facilitation Pilots, the facilitator worked primarily on designing a stakeholder processes and coaching local government staff. An environmental planner for the city of New Bedford, with an interest in learning more about facilitating stakeholder processes, played the lead

role in facilitating the stakeholder process. The professional facilitator was rarely “front and center” during the course of the project, instead working being the scenes to help City staff prepare for and convene the process. As such, serving primarily as a mentor, few of the stakeholders were fully aware of the facilitator’s contribution to the project.

Even without being “out-front” in the stakeholder process, however, the facilitator played an essential role in the process. In this case, the facilitator designed the stakeholder and public outreach process that formed the blueprint for the brownfields redevelopment planning process. Her coaching role served to build the capacity of city staff not only to address this issue but potentially many other issues in the future.

This project demonstrates in part the challenge of assessing facilitation processes. Facilitation assessment must be considered in the context of any given project, based on the assigned roles of the facilitator. A facilitator can play multiple roles (for example, fact-finder, mediator, negotiator, problem solver, etc.), which can vary widely from project to project. In this case, acting primarily as a process designer and mentor, comparisons with other processes in this brownfields assessment are limited. Nonetheless, overall lessons about the application of facilitation to brownfields redevelopment can be gleaned, and common threads with other projects observed.

One of these observations is the value of continuity in leadership positions in the lead local agencies. In this case, as in other brownfield cases which are noted, a change in personnel resulted in significant impacts. The city planner that worked closely the facilitator left her position which required someone unfamiliar with the project to step into that leadership position. The new city planner, with neither the history of the project or as keen a sense of the potential value of (and interest in) facilitation, struggled with how to best use the facilitator.

After meeting with the new city planner, the facilitator also met with the city’s Economic Development staff. They all concurred that the facilitator should design a process to bring civic leaders together to discuss the project. Turning her attentions to this issue, she designed an action plan and submitted it to the city. After several weeks of limited communication, the facilitator received a call from the city planner asking if she knew about the meeting of city leaders scheduled for that evening. She had not been informed about the meeting, and this in essence reflected again the lack of understanding about how to use the skills and capabilities of the facilitator.

After working with the new city staff for some time, the facilitator actually suggested to the city that they return the remaining EPA funds if they could not use her further. In response, the city indicated its desire to retain the funds as they envisioned other tasks would arise. But after several months of no activity, the EPA regional coordinator suggested she use the funds to prepare a final report on the project.

One of the critical lessons generated from this project was the importance of obtaining commitment and involvement from local leaders, especially

government agencies, in brownfield redevelopment projects. Another issue identified was how to measure, at the inception of the project, the level of commitment by local agencies. One suggestion offered was to use a competitive process to initiate facilitation services. The rationale for this recommendation was that local leaders might be more invested in using facilitative services, making it more a valued and utilized commodity with a clearer sense of scope and direction.

Ultimately, the initial project objectives were met. Three sites were identified for evaluation, and Phase 1 and 2 assessments were conducted at the three top sites emerging from the process. Follow-up and implementation lagged, however, which had a chilling effect not only on the substantive outcomes but on the likelihood of continued participation and trust in agencies responsible for implementation. This represents a missed opportunity for using the facilitator, as facilitators often assist in designing an implementation process that can be monitored by the stakeholders.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Early in the redevelopment process

Primary Facilitator Roles: Collaborative process design and coaching

Primary Process Characteristics: Multi-stakeholder collaborative process

Primary Challenges: Lead City staffer left and replacement did not bring the same level of understanding, enthusiasm and support for the facilitation process

Primary Lessons Learned: Importance of staff continuity and support at the highest level of city/government agency leadership

2. Hudson County, NJ - Region 2

Background

Hudson County is located across the Hudson River from New York City. In many ways it is the brownfields “poster child.” There are over 600 contaminated sites in the county dating back to its heavy industrial era, with an average of 14 contaminated sites per square mile. Unlike many of the National Brownfields Assessment Pilots, which focus on a particular site or an area containing possible sites, this pilot provided assistance to four municipalities to establish brownfields redevelopment programs.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

This project epitomizes several of the great challenges to collaborative processes. First, some key leaders in the process held the perception that collaboration does not mix with power and politics. Second, many lacked an

understanding about what constitutes “alternative dispute resolution” and the range of activities that can be conducted by a facilitator. Third, some felt the best way to move a redevelopment agenda forward was not to collaborate with other stakeholders but engage in public relations to promote the desired outcome.

The four communities involved in the project have a longstanding relationship with the County and its redevelopment officials. An Advisory Committee was established representing these communities to provide input into the process. But the facilitator was not asked to lead the meetings. She observed the meetings, and talked with its members about how facilitation might be used. But she was never invited to participate at a higher level. There did not appear to be any dissatisfaction with the limited services provided. Rather, it appeared that the involvement of a facilitator was not desired, other than being a potential “ace in the hole” if a conflict were to emerge.

This project was originally nominated for funding by EPA Region 2 personnel because they felt expanded public involvement was needed. But use of the facilitator in this case, or rather the general lack thereof, leads to a crucial question. Why did the project sponsors pursue a Brownfields Facilitation Pilot grant? One suggestion was that the project sponsors were excellent fund raisers, and when made aware of the possibility of additional funds to support the redevelopment effort, they applied as part of their “sweep” of possible funding options.

This view was reinforced by local project sponsors conveying there was really no role for the facilitator because of concerns about conducting a “transparent” public involvement process. This approach was portrayed as inconsistent with the political culture, and there was concern it might slow down the process of achieving the goals of the local project sponsors. This was further reinforced by the hiring of a public relations firm at the same time as minimizing the potential role of the facilitator.

Furthermore, when the facilitator identified process design options and recommendations to be considered by the local project sponsors, the recommendations were “dismissed” as “premature.” This might be considered a legitimate concern under some circumstances, but again, no role for the facilitator was integrated into the process. In keeping with the intent of the brownfields grant, public information meetings were held in each of the five communities involved. But the facilitator had no role in these meetings. The Advisory Group for the project continued to meet to “collaborate” on building the brownfields redevelopment strategy, but the facilitator was not asked to participate. The pattern was clear.

In the end, the role of the facilitator and the outcomes of the project need to be separated. There is no evidence that the meetings held by the project sponsors were not productive, or did not achieve the desired objectives. Yet, the funds intended for the facilitator were not put to effective use and likely could have been used more effectively elsewhere. This project raised several questions about how the grant making process could be improved to ensure limited funds are used more effectively.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Within the first year of the National Pilot

Primary Facilitator Roles: Observe meetings of the Advisory Committee, limited coaching

Primary Process Characteristics: Formation of an Advisory Committee with limited stakeholder participation; five public meetings convened

Primary Challenges: Lack of clarity on how to use the facilitator; perception that the local sponsors did not want a broad stakeholder or public involvement process; no support from local project sponsors

Primary Lessons Learned: One “lesson” proposed is that EPA consider developing minimum public involvement guidelines which must be met as a condition of receiving an EPA grant; the original purpose for recommending this project for funding was not realized.

3. Milwaukee, WI - Region 5

Background

Milwaukee is another location characterized by decades of industrial activity, only to see shifts in the economy over time leave large parcels of formerly industrial lands underutilized, as well as contaminated. The focus of the Milwaukee National Brownfields Assessment Pilot was the Menomonee River Valley. For much of 1800’s, this area was filled with cut and graded material from the surrounding bluffs, and the Valley’s many wetlands and marshes were filled.

Today, this 1500-acre industrial “beltway” contains 300 to 400 acres of abandoned industrial facilities such as foundries, power plants, tanneries and chemical companies. From a high of more than 50,000 employees in the 1930’s, fewer than 10,000 jobs exist in the Valley today. High unemployment still persists in the Valley, along with extensive poverty, so one of the purposes of the proposed brownfields redevelopment project was to create new jobs. The initial goal was to redevelop one or two properties as test cases which then might lead to more extensive redevelopment. There were about 20-25 property owners in the brownfields corridor.

One of the critical barriers to redevelopment relates back to the filling of Valley wetlands. Those conditions have given rise to major concerns about the quality of groundwater, and the level of effort which would be required to clean-up the groundwater. This would first require the installation of monitoring wells to assess the extent of the problem.

This represented another major challenge to the project. In Wisconsin, if groundwater contamination is found, it becomes part of the public record and is actionable. It is not left for some future decision-making but by law requires clean-up. Therefore, property owners who suspect some recent or past actions might have caused groundwater contamination would likely be unwilling to allow voluntary monitoring on their property given the implications.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

It was in this context that the EPA Regional office felt Milwaukee might benefit from the Brownfields Facilitation Pilot program. There was a sense that the initial Brownfields Demonstration Pilot was making little headway and needed some additional organization and direction. Once again, turnover in City staff had left the project without much focus or impetus.

Originally, the facilitation grant timing was good, and it appeared the facilitator would be assigned during the first year of starting the Demonstration Pilot. But communication gaps between the EPA Region and Headquarters resulted in delays. Then, before the selected facilitator could fully engage on the project she moved and was replaced by a colleague.

This raised a point that is critical to many collaborative processes - the selection of the facilitator. When no local facilitator was found to conduct the project through the contracting mechanism available to support the project, the first facilitator had been selected in large part because of her familiarity with Milwaukee having once lived there. But her replacement had no history with Milwaukee. In the end, some local sponsors and participants, who were not involved in the selection process, perceived this as EPA dictating what they should do.

Furthermore, it was the opinion of the facilitators that by the time they actually became engaged in the project a local presence was needed to really create value. In the period it took to bring the facilitators on board, the project had made a positive turn and multi-stakeholder meetings were being convened, without a third-party facilitator. If a facilitator was to really support the process at this point, somebody was needed in Milwaukee on a regular basis.

One other perception of the entire process is worth noting. At the time potential funding from the Facilitation Pilot became known to the City, without fully understanding the nature of the Pilot, at least some envisioned the project as “free money” and a way to add “staff” to support the National Pilot (since the City was understaffed). They envisioned the role of the facilitator primarily to work with a couple recalcitrant property owners if need be. The project was apparently perceived more as an opportunity to address immediate staffing needs than in the broader context of the goals of the Facilitation Pilot program.

In this case, the facilitator, based in Washington, D.C., was asked primarily to assist in negotiations with land owners. He was well-received by some of the property owners, and a few were encouraged to get more involved.

But he also encountered one person who would not talk to anybody and another who wanted to talk only with the City directly, not through a third party.

Thereafter, phone calls were exchanged between the City and the facilitator but no other tasks were assigned. There was a feeling among some that both could have been more proactive, but in the end this was a case where timing, the evolution of the project from its inception, the location of the facilitator and perceptions about the role of EPA Headquarters, among other factors, thwarted progress.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Within the first year of the National Pilot

Primary Facilitator Roles: Conduct outreach to recalcitrant property owners

Primary Process Characteristics: Formation and convening of a multi-stakeholder group, without assistance of the facilitator

Primary Challenges: Lack of clarity on how to use the facilitator; timing between project needs and availability of the facilitator (i.e., the facilitator might have been quite useful during the first year when the project was lagging to help provide focus and support, but was not available to the project then)

Primary Lessons Learned: Should have local participants involved in selecting the facilitator (who probably should have been local given the need for evening meetings, etc.); have Regional Brownfields Coordinators provide “workshops” on how facilitation and related services can be used; engage facilitators as early in the process as possible; EPA might develop a well-formalized set of criteria governing who should receive grants as well as who should be selected as facilitators; improve process for matching-up facilitators with specific projects.

4. Comanche Nation, Lawton, OK - Region 6

Background

As one of the tribal brownfields initiatives, this project represents a cross-section of challenges faced in brownfields redevelopment projects across the nation. In this case, however, the situation had an added level of complexity because the site was jointly governed by three different tribes. This pilot project included not only the Comanche Nation but also the Apache and Kiowa tribes. Jointly, the three tribes manage about 5,500 acres of land in Southwest Oklahoma. The government seat of the Comanche Nation is located about seven miles from Lawton, Oklahoma.

More specifically, this project focused on the Fort Sill Indian School facility. Formerly a Bureau of Indian Affairs Boarding School, the buildings are contaminated with asbestos and lead, and must be cleaned-up before redevelopment and reuse can occur. The school has been abandoned for about 20

years. The three tribes had quite different views about how to redevelop the property.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

The facilitator selected for this case had extensive experience working with tribal communities. But she encountered several challenges. First, the tribal staff person who was originally involved in discussions about the Facilitation Pilot had a vague understanding about what the program entailed, even after receiving the grant. Soon thereafter she left her position. Remaining staff also did not have a clear understanding about the project or how a facilitator might be used. This is a recurring theme in several of the pilot projects.

Another challenge was that the three tribes which jointly own the land have a self-described competitive relationship and different ideas about how the land might be used after clean-up. The relationships among the three tribes are complex, and working together in the context of both historical and ongoing relationships added to that level of complexity.

Nonetheless, the facilitator worked with the Comanche Tribe Environmental Department to develop a series of options concerning how she might assist. This included helping plan and convene public involvement meetings, engaging in jurisdictional discussions with the BIA and EPA, and conducting a workshop on decision making in Indian Country for federal agency personnel.

The facilitator met with the successor to the original tribal leader for the project and through a series of meetings with other tribal leaders was able to develop an informal assessment for the project. She found significant common ground among the tribes, including:

- 1) A sense of urgency to proceed. The buildings were continuing to deteriorate and needed to be repaired in the near future to salvage their value.
- 2) The value of re-use. The redevelopment would provide funds for all three tribes, contribute to cultural preservation of the tribes, and provide services to tribal members and others.
- 3) Frustration. Each of the tribes expressed frustration with their intergovernmental relationships and the federal government, noting that the KCA structure suffers from lack of cooperation.

This assessment seemingly paved the way for a series of activities to be conducted by the facilitator. Even though the tribes did not make a clear connection between the facilitator's role (as funded by the facilitation pilot) and the ultimate outcome of the brownfields planning grant, the facilitator had hoped to help the three tribes take the results of the planning grant (an environmental assessment of the abandoned school) and develop a joint plan on how to redevelop the land. But while interest was expressed by the tribes in her

continued participation, more changes in tribal project leadership led to no further activity.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Within the first year of the National Pilot

Primary Facilitator Roles: Provide an assessment of potential roles and values of using a facilitator to support the brownfields planning process

Primary Process Characteristics: Intertribal work group not involving the facilitator

Primary Challenges: Staff turnover; lack of clarity on how to use the facilitator; complex inter-tribal relationships and dynamics

Primary Lessons Learned: Need for all three tribes to understand and value the potential roles of the facilitator, perhaps through inter-governmental workshops; develop a work plan adopted by the local project leaders before work by facilitator is begun; reinforce the value of continuity among local leadership to sustain support for the project even if staff change.

5 Ogden, Utah - Region 8

Background

The growth of Ogden, Utah was largely a product of the railroad boom in the mid-1800s. By the late 1800s Ogden had grown from a frontier town into a major industrial center, and this was to last almost a century. But in the 1970s and 1980s, the railroads and related business began closing, and with that turn of events came high unemployment and environmental problems. These environmental problems included numerous brownfields sites. The focus of this brownfields project was a five-block area in downtown Ogden, comprised of vacant rail yards, a former tannery, large warehouses, and “junkyards.”

The pilot was funded in April 1997 and some progress was made during that first year. During the second year of the project, however, progress slowed. The Phase 1 Environmental Studies were complete and discussions were underway with property owners about their cooperation on Phase 2 studies. But property owners were not highly enthusiastic about the Phase 2 studies. This created the impetus for a City official to seek the Facilitation Pilot grant believing a facilitator might be helpful in discussions with property owners, as well as with internal city communications.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

The facilitator was selected to assist with this Brownfields Facilitation Pilot in November 1998. Early in the process the City envisioned two important roles for her. One was to facilitate negotiations with the property owner of one of the potential sites to be considered for re-development. The other was to facilitate inter-agency discussions within City government.

These activities were successful. The negotiations with the property owner led to an agreement to close one of two sites, and consolidate operations adjacent but outside the brownfields boundary. The operation had been the subject of several enforcement actions so closing the site was a major objective of the negotiation. That aspect of the facilitator's activities was apparently successful. Likewise, helping organize and facilitate a series of meetings with representatives of the various city agencies involved assisted the city clarify its position and provide the impetus for action.

City elections were held during 1999, however, and this resulted in inactivity on the entire brownfields project for several months. With new leadership were new perspectives about how to address the brownfields site addressed by the pilot project. There was no stakeholder group overseeing the brownfields planning project to keep it going. In fact, the city discouraged the thought of opening the process to public involvement scrutiny. And unlike the early stages of the project, city personnel now did not appear to have a clear understanding of the utility and value of the facilitator.

Activity picked-up again in the fall of 2000, this time, however, proceeding without the assistance of the facilitator. The original project manager in the Public Works Department was replaced by a staff member in the City's Redevelopment Office. In November 2000, the new brownfields pilot project manager informed EPA they were not interested in continuing the facilitation pilot project.

This project did not involve a multi-stakeholder collaborative process, or a public participation program. The focus was on internal, city department negotiations and cooperation, and negotiations with one key landowner. While there was significant enthusiasm for using the facilitator initially, despite favorable evaluations there was not sufficient support at the higher levels of leadership after the election. Although the City ultimately decided to extend the contract for the facilitator after the first three successful inter-agency meetings, the City moved forward without the facilitator after a fourth meeting.

The new brownfields project manager, described as a "do it my own way" person, picked-up the negotiations with the property owner, without the facilitator, and was able to reach an agreement on the purchase price for the property. Participants in the process noted that while the facilitator was not involved in the final negotiations she had made a positive impact, setting the stage for the later negotiations conducted by the brownfields project manager. Early in the process, when the relationships between the City and the property owner were dysfunctional, the facilitator helped create the foundation for future negotiations.

This is another case where change in leadership resulted in the facilitator's role being significantly reduced. Did this undermine the outcomes? It appears not, as the outcome on negotiations for the property proved successful. On the other hand, the facilitator was critical to setting the stage for the negotiations. While most successful brownfields redevelopment projects studied benefited from bringing all the key stakeholders into the process, it is difficult to say if the lack of such a process handicapped the long-term implementability of brownfields redevelopment.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: One and a half years after inception, after project stalled

Primary Facilitator Roles: Negotiator and mediator

Primary Process Characteristics: Inter-agency and property owner negotiations, without a wider stakeholder or public involvement process

Primary Challenges: Lead City staff changed and replacement project leader did not bring the same level of understanding, enthusiasm and support for the facilitation process; Mayoral elections slowed and re-directed process

Primary Lessons Learned: Importance of staff continuity and support at the highest level of city/government agency leadership.

6. Spirit Lake Nation, ND - Region 8

Background

The Spirit Lake Nation reservation was established through an 1867 treaty with the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Bands. It is located in northeastern portion of North Dakota. The Nation has a population exceeding 5000 people and the land area covers about 383 square miles.

The Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot focused on two vacant building and two landfills in the Fort Totten area. The concern with the buildings, a former boarding school and hospital, centered on asbestos contamination from large holes in the exterior. The landfills, active in the 1970s and 1980s, were used for residential, commercial and industrial waste. The extent of potential problems associated with the site are largely unknown, however, as the dumping was unregulated and the landfills were not lined.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

The facilitator selected to assist the Spirit Lake Nation was part of an organization that works with tribes throughout the country. As a result, she was well versed in tribal

matters. The first major step taken by the facilitator was to contact the tribal project leader, and soon thereafter she sent a questionnaire to the tribal project leader for the purpose of gaining tribal perspectives on brownfields issues. She then planned and conducted a two-day workshop on negotiation, communication and related topics considered pertinent to the brownfields redevelopment project.

Thereafter, a situation assessment was planned to determine who should be involved and the scope of the project, and the tribe seemed interested in having her involved. They appeared to have a clear sense of the need for a facilitator and the value a facilitator could bring to the project. But the workshop was the last major activity undertaken by the facilitator. No further activity was generated.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: In second year of the National Pilot

Primary Facilitator Roles: Conduct training in negotiation and communications

Primary Process Characteristics: No stakeholder or advisory group formed

Primary Challenges: Lack of clear sense of purpose and direction for facilitator

Primary Lessons Learned: This case reinforces a question raised for some of the other facilitation pilot projects as well - should funding be provided for projects without a clear work plan for how a facilitator will be utilized in the context of identified challenges and prospective or desired outcomes? Also, what level of support is needed by grant recipients to enhance their likelihood of success (e.g., should some level of training on the challenges of brownfields redevelopment, the potential role of and value of facilitation, the value of stakeholder involvement, etc.)? The issue of including training and information sharing as a provision of receiving funds should be considered.

7. Tohono O’odham Nation, AZ - Region 9

Background

The Tohono O’odham peoples have lived in southwestern Arizona for what is estimated as more than 10,000 years. Currently the tribe’s population is about 15,000. The proposed brownfields redevelopment project concerned the Minerec Mining Chemical manufacturing plant in the San Xavier District. The tribe suspected the site was contaminated and was concerned it may present environmental or public health problems.

The goal of the redevelopment project was to assess the potential contamination at this site and develop a plan for the tribe to clean-up the site. The unique aspect of this project compared to most other pilots was the effort to conduct a situation assessment early in the course of the project to ascertain how best to move forward with the

redevelopment effort. In part, the approach taken in this project was in response to the lessons learned in other Facilitation Pilots where it appeared recipients were not adequately prepared to fully utilize a facilitator or a collaborative process. Conducting a situation assessment is typically considered the best approach to determining if conditions are right to proceed with a collaborative process, and, if so, how best to proceed.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

When the prospect for funding to support a facilitation pilot was presented to the tribe, the EPA program coordinator discussed with the tribe the prospect of beginning the project with a situation assessment prior to initiating any other activities. Tribal leaders agreed with this approach and the EPA program coordinator met with tribal leaders on several occasions to conduct the assessment. The assessment also included meetings with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, contractors who had worked at the Minerec Site and others.

The assessment noted the Minerec site was under the oversight and direction of a court order. Subsequently, the company had released all its employees and closed down. The relationship between the facility managers, court representatives and tribal representatives, however, was not one of mutual respect and cooperation. In the end, the EPA program coordinator did not believe the conditions were right, at that point in time, to engage a facilitator or convene a collaborative process.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: An assessment was conducted prior to engaging a facilitator

Primary Facilitator Roles: The assessment was intended to ascertain the potential and appropriate roles of a facilitator

Primary Process Characteristics: The assessment involved meeting with Tribal leaders to determine if the conditions for proceeding with a facilitated collaborative process existed.

Primary Challenges: Applying techniques built on cooperation, transparency and stakeholder participation when such techniques have not been widely used

Primary Lessons Learned: Assessments are a valuable tool for evaluating whether, and under what conditions, facilitators and collaborative processes are likely to add value

8. Portland, OR - Region 10

Background

Portland has a long history of redeveloping brownfields, dating back more than thirty years. So brownfields redevelopment is not new to Portland. The Brownfields Facilitation Pilot Project was initiated at the suggestion of EPA Regional staff, not because of uncertainty about how to proceed with brownfields redevelopment but because of the challenges of a specific project where mediation services were considered valuable.

The particular project being considered was the redevelopment of sites within the Enterprise Community along the waterfront. The Enterprise Community was characterized by high unemployment and poverty, and environmental justice was a critical concern. The environmental impacts associated with revitalizing waterfront areas were a critical aspect of the project.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

A facilitator was engaged on this project for two primary reasons. First, staff communications and related challenges were encountered as the original National Brownfields Assessment Pilot project gave way to Portland's Brownfields Showcase Project. Second, environmental justice and community interests felt their interests were not being fully met in the brownfields redevelopment project, and EPA and the City thought a mediator might provide needed assistance in working through these issues.

A number of challenges, however, stood in the way. The facilitator was first contacted in 1998, about two years after the inception of the Assessment Pilot. But it was more than a year after that before contractual issues were resolved so she could actually begin work. Additionally, a contract to conduct public involvement associated with the brownfields redevelopment project was awarded by the City to an environmental justice organization, but there was some general dissatisfaction with their efforts. This created additional tension between the city and environmental justice groups.

The facilitator was assigned several tasks: 1) help facilitate discussions among various city bureau staff who had some involvement with the proposed projects; 2) help improve relationships between the city and certain representatives of the environmental justice community; and 3) conduct an assessment of businesses targeted for brownfields redevelopment (salvage operations) to ascertain their interest in participating in the project.

Two additional tasks for the facilitator grew from a situation which evolved between the City and the environmental justice group conducting public outreach. One was to help improve communications and relationships between leaders of the two groups. The other was an assessment of how a collaborative process might support both

public outreach and the community advisory group. But the leader of the environmental justice organization involved abruptly resigned, and this ended the facilitator's involvement. The prospect of assigning new tasks were raised on several occasions, but no activity was forthcoming.

This was another case where, because of the primarily advisory nature of the work, few people were fully aware of the work conducted by the facilitator. And again, several of the city personnel who supported the project left their positions with the city which hampered data collection on the project.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: More than three years after inception of the National Brownfields Assessment Pilot

Primary Facilitator Roles: Facilitate inter-agency staff discussions; coaching; project assessment

Primary Process Characteristics: Significant environmental justice issues

Primary Challenges: Delays in contracting to begin work; issues among City staff as well as between City staff and the environmental justice community; changing staff

Primary Lessons Learned: Need for a comprehensive, integrated plan of study that outlines the tasks to be conducted, and their interrelationship with overall project goals; value of being engaged early in the process and timely contracting; clarifying the most appropriate role of the facilitator for different groups within the process; and the value of locally, rather than federally, generated interest to ensure local commitment to collaborative processes.

9. Puyallup Nation, WA - Region 10

Background

The Puyallup Tribe settled onto their current lands in the mid 1800s. Their reservation covers several square miles with the Tacoma city limits. The Tribe's current population is about 2,600. Their location near the Puget Sound is critical to many of the Tribes traditional and modern activities.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

Initially, the facilitator selected to assist the Puyallup Nation was asked to help the tribe prepare and conduct negotiations with the land owner of a proposed brownfields site as well as develop a public involvement plan. The site would provide needed land

for a port facility, considered central to the Tribes economic interests as well as the economic interests of the broader Tacoma community.

The facilitator faced one rather unique challenge among the brownfields cases studied. The negotiations with the property owner were to be confidential, were not to be disclosed to the public until after their completion and the next steps of the redevelopment project were ready to proceed. As it turned out, the negotiations to acquire the land were not successful. These landowner negotiations were different from other brownfields projects assessed where the negotiations with landowners were openly part of the redevelopment process.

Had the negotiations been successful the tribe could have proceeded with the plan to acquire the land they needed for a port facility, at which time they would have implemented the public involvement plan developed by the facilitator. But since the negotiations were not successful the tribe did not proceed with the community involvement plan.

Meanwhile, it remained possible for the deal will be transacted in the future. The basis for the future sale of the land was successfully negotiated among the parties, which represented a positive step forward in the relationships among those necessary to implement redevelopment.

This pilot actually created some mild controversy worth noting. The Facilitation Pilot project began as a result of discussions between EPA Headquarters and tribal representatives at a brownfields conference. The regional EPA brownfields coordinator was not aware the project was being considered for funding until it was awarded. Likewise, the owners of the land (the proposed brownfield site that was adjacent to tribal lands) were upset that funds went to the tribe rather than to them. In all cases, however, pilot funding went either to local or tribal governments sponsoring redevelopment projects, not to private entities.

This project demonstrates the impact of misperceptions and less than thorough communications among all the parties involved. It is understandable given the complex lines of communication involved, but nonetheless reinforces the value of having regional and local participants in these projects understand the scope, guidelines and objectives of such projects.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged within the first year of the National Pilot

Primary Facilitator Roles: Lead private negotiations with property owners and prepare a public involvement strategy

Primary Process Characteristics: Public involvement contingent on success of land acquisition negotiations

Primary Challenges: Uncertainty about tasks and roles of the facilitator when the broader scope is contingent on negotiations undertaken during the course of the project

Primary Lessons Learned: Develop a process that would make clear how facilitation services could be used, perhaps in workshops with participants from projects where facilitation might be needed; importance of communications among all parties involved, including different levels of government, nation to nation status with tribes, local sponsors and potential project partners, and other stakeholders likely to be involved in the project.

Appendix G

Telephone Surveys: Summary of Locally-Initiated Facilitation Projects

This assessment project began by focusing on the twelve Brownfield's Facilitation Pilot projects supported by EPA. In each of these cases, EPA sought out potential Pilot projects and provided funds to assist ongoing EPA National Brownfields Assessment Pilots with facilitators.

Researching available data bases, and contacting Brownfields Coordinators in each EPA regional office, academic institutions and government consultants, an additional 25 cases were identified where facilitation was used in brownfields redevelopment initiatives. At least one project was located in nine of EPA's ten regions.

In each of these "locally initiated" cases, either local brownfields project coordinators or EPA regional coordinators clearly recognized the potential value of involving a facilitator. They had at least some understanding of the skills contributed by a facilitator and the conditions necessary to enhance the likelihood of success. The projects were not solicited directly by EPA as part of its Facilitation Pilot Program.

The facilitation processes used in these cases varied widely, from one time, half-day meetings to fully facilitated processes lasting the course of a project (three to four years). In each case, however, there was an intentional, well-defined purpose and set of expectations associated with engaging a facilitator. This represents a major point of distinction from the solicited EPA Facilitation Pilots.

In many respects, these projects are perhaps more representative of typical applications of facilitated, collaborative processes. In these projects, sufficient value was placed on engaging a facilitator to warrant raising or allocating the funds necessary. Therefore, adding these cases to the assessment is important to understanding the broader range of dynamics involved with using a facilitator in brownfields redevelopment applications. Given their genesis, they are also perhaps more indicative of the likelihood of success.

Of the 25 additional projects identified, twelve were selected for more in-depth study. This parallels the number of cases from the Facilitation Pilots. For both sets of projects, some were selected for in-depth case studies (with site visits), while the remaining were analyzed based on telephone interviews. Of the locally-initiated cases, two were selected for case studies: New Orleans, EPA Region 6 and East Palo Alto, EPA Region 9.

Brief summaries of the remaining 10 cases follow, listed by EPA Region.

1. Lowell, MA – Region 1

Background

Lowell is one of the old industrial centers of the Northeast. It has a long history of industrial activity, which now includes with both superfund and brownfields sites. As part of the City's process to identify appropriate brownfield sites for redevelopment in Lowell, a community group was engaged to assist in the process. Ultimately, they identified an eight acre site they felt would be

appropriate for redevelopment, and which could be used for a needed middle school.

Dating back 100 years, most of the selected site was originally used for a coal gasification facility. Subsequently it was owned and operated by a petroleum company. Most pollutant releases on the land were petroleum-related. An auto body paint shop also occupied part of the land. Furthermore, the land remained occupied with commercial and industrial activity, meaning any redevelopment efforts would involve relocating existing businesses. These are often referred to as emerging brownfields.

“Emerging brownfields,” where existing businesses still operate, have a distinct set of characteristics from sites where the land has been abandoned. Both have their own set of challenges. A critical aspect of most emerging brownfields is the cost of moving the existing facility in addition to clean-up. For abandoned sites the critical issues typically revolve around responsibility for clean-up and the resulting economics of redevelopment.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

The facilitator became involved with the process in October 1998. He helped establish a stakeholder process and facilitated meetings of the stakeholder group consisting of representatives of the City, EPA, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and the community-based Coalition for a Better Acre. This project was particularly challenging from a public participation perspective because most people in the area were Cambodian and Hispanic for whom English was not their first language.

This project resulted in a plan for implementing an environmental assessment of the selected site, to determine the extent and cost of required clean-up. Also emanating from this project were negotiations focused on purchasing the land and relocating current landowners.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged early in the life of the project

Primary Facilitator Roles: Help establish and facilitate a stakeholder collaborative process

Primary Process Characteristics: Focus on site clean-up but not on negotiations with land owners about acquiring or relocating the business

Primary Challenges: Communicating with community members whose first language was not English

Primary Lessons Learned: Early engagement of the facilitator was a significant asset; emerging brownfields can be significantly more complicated since the costs

of relocating an existing business can be difficult to predict (e.g., potential loss of revenues due to moving) and resistance to moving is often encountered.

2. Columbia, MS - Region 4

Background

The focus of this project was redevelopment of a brownfields site in the Webb Corner community of Columbia, Mississippi. The project site was associated also with a superfund site, a retired chemical company owned by Ryco Chemical. The brownfields site actually formed a ring around the superfund site, comprised of 81 acres with about 60 property owners. The area was characterized by considerable low-income rental housing, and significant racial and economic divisions existed in the city as a whole.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

In this case, the City of Columbia decided to conduct a series of “charrettes” to obtain community input and assess how to approach redevelopment of the site. In August 1999, the City conducted a three-day charrette which was comprised of several meetings: one with all the key stakeholders; one with business and church leaders; and then several involving the general public.

An interesting aspect of this process was that the facilitator and a land use planner hired to assist with the charrette compiled a summary document based on the input from the various meetings comprising the charrette. This document contained a statistical analysis of attendance and responses, as well as redevelopment recommendations emerging from the charrettes.

This charrette process differed from those used in other brownfields projects which were part of this assessment. In most others, recommendations were derived “real-time” with direct guidance from the participants. In this case, the planner developed recommendations after the charrette based on input gathered during the charrette. Nonetheless, the local project coordinator considered the charrettes and their by-products critical to redeveloping the selected sites.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged during the process, not at initiation, after a clearly-defined, discrete role for a facilitator had been defined

Primary Facilitator Roles: Facilitate a charrette, analyze results and prepare recommendations based on the analysis

Primary Process Characteristics: Multiple “charrette” meetings with different interest groups; charrettes typically used in design projects to encourage creative problem solving, identify possible solutions, and engage various stakeholders and experts

Primary Challenges: Environmental justice issues where longstanding economic and racial divisions shape perspectives; develop recommendations based on the input from charrettes without the opportunity to obtain and incorporate feedback on specific recommendations

Primary Lessons Learned: Facilitated brownfields efforts take on many forms and can be successful in a variety of forms; identifying and engaging well-respected organizations and leaders which represent different perspectives within the community input (e.g., church and business leaders) is critical to success.

3. Louisville, KY - Region 4

Background

This EPA National Assessment Pilot project began in September 1995. The City established a working group with all key stakeholders and considered it important to engage a facilitator to help plan and guide meetings, as well as assist in developing implementable recommendations.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

Just prior to the initiation of this project, General Electric was using a facilitation process for some of its work in the community. The Mayor of Louisville had observed their process and thought it could be useful to a project such as their brownfields initiative. So the City engaged a facilitator familiar with the “GE approach” to assist with the brownfields project. There is little information, however, to suggest this approach was significantly different from what would be considered typical of a facilitated process.

The working group encountered significant diversity issues, characterized by a powerful environmental activist and environmental engineering consultant who were at odds with each other. The local project coordinator commented that the facilitator was helping in moving the group past the potential adverse impacts created by the relationship between these individuals.

More generally, the local project coordinator stated the facilitation effort was crucial to the success of the project. According to the City coordinator, the facilitator played an essential in helping the group develop goals to guide the redevelopment process. The facilitator also helped frame discussions about how the process of brownfields redevelopment could be improved.

The facilitator was most heavily involved during the developmental phases of the project which occurred during the first couple of years. Thereafter, the facilitator was only involved on as-needed basis to move the group and the project pass potential points of impasse.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged early in the process

Primary Facilitator Roles: Facilitate a diverse stakeholder group; mediate adversarial relationships among key participants

Primary Process Characteristics: The facilitator not only helped develop and achieve specific project goals but helped identify potential improvements to the redevelopment process itself

Primary Challenges: Work through the dynamics of two strong-minded individuals with fundamentally different values and views about how the project should proceed

Primary Lessons Learned: The significance of City and project leadership to understand the value of facilitation and support its application; such support and leadership is especially important when stakeholder processes encounter and must work through difficult circumstances

4. Kalamazoo, MI - Region 5

Background

The characteristics of brownfields redevelopment in Kalamazoo are different from most communities involved in the assessment. This emanates from city ownership of brownfields. Once identified as candidates for redevelopment the city typically buys brownfields within the community. As such, the City is the property owner in most cases involving brownfields.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

In this case, rather than using a professional and impartial facilitator, the City of Kalamazoo hired the Coalition for Urban Redevelopment (CUR) to interface with the community on their brownfields redevelopment project. CUR was composed of business, financial, community and environmental representatives, so effectively represented a microcosm of the city. Their involvement was considered an important element in engaging community members in the process, and therefore was important to success.

CUR conducted surveys and education programs, equipping and

encouraging the community to become more effectively involved in brownfields redevelopment. This approach to engaging the public reflected more of a community activism model of engagement than the more “impartial” approach typically associated with facilitation. At the same time, many of the activities undertaken by CUR were consistent with the organizing, planning and leadership tasks typically assumed by a facilitator.

This raises a series of important questions, such as the need under all cases for the facilitator to be considered impartial, and whether under various circumstances the appropriate roles of facilitators might go beyond those typically associated with an impartial. This project demonstrates a strong community and social capital building component of brownfields redevelopment. This is a noteworthy characteristic of brownfields redevelopment found in several communities that were part of this assessment.

One of CUR’s leaders, a former state representative, acted as the lead facilitator for CUR. This raises another interesting aspect of this project - the value of facilitator credibility and leadership. In this case, the facilitator was a well respected community leader and well received in the role of facilitator. Under other circumstances, however, a former elected official might be considered to have an agenda, which would undermine their capability to act effectively as a facilitator. This project raises several important questions about “best practices” pertaining to facilitator selection and the role of facilitators.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged early in the stakeholder participation process

Primary Facilitator Roles: Community education and activism; facilitation of community involvement

Primary Process Characteristics: Community and stakeholder involvement in this project was built on fundamentals for enhancing civic engagement; the facilitator was a former elected official, representing a community-based coalition of stakeholders

Primary Challenges: Engaging the broader public to effectively participate in a brownfields redevelopment project which can be challenging given their complex technical and economic characteristics

Primary Lessons Learned: The activities and approaches undertaken by “facilitators” of brownfields redevelopment projects do not fit a pre-determined model; flexibility is required in thinking through what is needed to appropriately engage stakeholders and community members in these projects; trust in the facilitator is important; facilitators can come from various backgrounds and should be matched to the specific dynamics and challenges of a given project

5. Denver-Commerce (Sand Creek), CO - Region 8

Background

This project began as a National EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilot, with the funding going to the State because neither Denver nor Commerce (a northern industrial suburb) was inclined to take the lead on the project at that time. The local project leaders, however, had a strong sense that a facilitator would be helpful in developing the strategies and coalitions necessary to move the project forward.

This redevelopment effort began not as a site-specific project, but rather as a broader educational and public awareness project focused on the industrial area around the border between Denver and Commerce. The area being considered also contained a superfund site.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

The facilitator selected to assist with this brownfields redevelopment project case was associated with the University of Colorado Center for Public/Private Cooperation. The Center primarily provided planning and strategy building tasks, although did help convene and facilitate a series of stakeholder focus groups. The make-up of the groups included city government officials, bankers, real estate brokers, among others.

Eventually, this facilitated process moved community leaders and stakeholders from looking at the broader industrial area to focusing on redeveloping a specific site. This was ultimately necessary to be able to undertake the more detailed analyses required to redevelop a contaminated site. The site selected was the Northside Treatment Plant.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged early in the redevelopment process

Primary Facilitator Roles: Facilitate stakeholder focus groups; plan and implement community education and awareness initiatives

Primary Process Characteristics: Use of focus groups; emphasis on community capacity-building

Primary Challenges: Initially, working in a setting where local government leadership structures were uncertain

Primary Lessons Learned: Reinforces the value in some circumstances of having local institutions respected by the community serve in the role of facilitator.

6. Murray, UT - Region 8

Background

This project was the prototype for the EPA Brownfields Facilitation Pilot program. In actuality, however, it involved the redevelopment of a Superfund site. Unlike most Superfund sites that are abandoned, this site was still being used for several businesses. This characteristic is in common with emerging brownfields sites.

Murray Smelter was located on a 141-acre parcel of land which was the site of two smelter operations between 1872 and 1949. At the time of its construction in 1902, the Murray Smelter was thought to be the largest primary lead smelter in the world. In 1949, the property's owner, Asarco, sold the property and the smelter was demolished. During the next fifty years, the site was occupied by a variety of businesses, including the manufacture of concrete products, an asphalt plant, wholesaling operations and some residential holdings.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

The facilitators managed a series of multi-stakeholder meetings focused on remediation and redevelopment (1996-1997), and later with some specific issues related to the continued redevelopment of the site (1999-2000). The success of this effort gave impetus to the initiation of the Facilitation Pilots and the funding to support facilitation services to assess their role in Brownfields redevelopment.

The three major outcomes of the facilitated process included a remediation plan supported by all the interested parties, a redevelopment plan and a commitment to integrate implementation of remedial actions into redevelopment activities. According to some participants in the process, a major highlight of the facilitation was transforming what they thought would be a convoluted process of two or more years to deal with issues in a piecemeal manner, and reducing that time to seven months while integrating all the issues.

Furthermore, the process provided the opportunity for the community to integrate its land use and development concepts into the technical process. As such, all the parties involved in the process, EPA, the State of Utah, the City, and past and present property owners, considered the process successful.

The lessons learned from this project set the tone and direction for initiating other brownfield redevelopment projects using facilitators. The role of the facilitator was considered essential to the progress and success of the initial project, as well as the follow-up effort. This project has been the subject of other assessments and more detailed accounts of this project are available.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged early in the redevelopment process

Primary Facilitator Roles: Facilitate and mediate redevelopment issues

Primary Process Characteristics: Stakeholder discussions in the context of meeting Superfund requirements and challenges

Primary Challenges: Addressing City and property owner concerns; the challenges associated with liability and other remediation issues of Superfund sites

Primary Lessons Learned: Even in complex and often adversarial settings, a well managed collaborative process can help all stakeholders achieve satisfactory outcomes; collaborative processes allow the convening agencies, particularly regulatory agencies, to remain in an advocacy position for their interests while allowing the facilitator to ensure an open and “impartial” process that can withstand the scrutiny of evaluation

7. Sioux Falls, SD - Region 8

Background

The City initiated this project in late 1996, focusing on redeveloping a site that had been used as a junkyard. In negotiations to purchase this site for redevelopment, however, the owner and City were far apart on the value of the land. The City suggested a price related to the improvements on the land and the owner suggested a price related to the cost of moving and re-establishing his business to another site. This is a common characteristic of emerging brownfields, where the purchase price for emerging brownfields is an obstacle due to different perspectives on the value of the land and the cost of relocating an ongoing, viable business.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

Initially, the facilitator was involved in negotiations to purchase the redevelopment site. Given the dynamics between the City and the property owner she initiated a form of shuttle diplomacy. After several exchanges, however, both the facilitator and the EPA regional brownfields coordinator (who was funding the facilitator) felt it was not in the best interest of the project to continue using her in this role.

As such, the City called on the Trust for Public Lands to help facilitate the purchase of the land. “Facilitation” in this case took on several dimensions, with different individuals involved based on the need of the project and matching that with the expertise of the “facilitator.”

The original facilitator was employed from early 1997 until early 1999. She helped bring together a working group comprised of property owners, State officials, EPA and the City. Their main product was a risk-based site assessment plan, which paved the way towards redevelopment of the site. The local project coordinator considered the facilitator to be a valuable asset in bringing the project to fruition.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged early in the project

Primary Facilitator Roles: Lead negotiations with the property owner as well as work with stakeholders

Primary Process Characteristics: Shuttle diplomacy approach to negotiations with land owner; Trust for Public Land taking over negotiations for the purchase of the land, freeing the project facilitator to focus on stakeholder participation

Primary Challenges: Assisting in negotiations to resolve the sale price for an “emerging” brownfield site with an operating business still on the site; development of an acceptable risk assessment plan

Primary Lessons Learned: Reinforces the value of recognizing and matching the best use of available expertise to the tasks required; in this case the Trust for Public Land was able to take their extensive experience in land negotiations and “facilitate” the purchase of the land; this allowed the facilitator to focus on stakeholder participation and planning; adaptability is an asset in collaborative processes to respond to dynamics that emerge during the course of a project

8. San Francisco, CA - Region 9

Background

This project began in 1996 as a National EPA Assessment Pilot at Bay View Hunters Point in San Francisco. Early in the process an environmental consultant was hired to assist with conducting educational activities and developing site selection criteria. They also provided oversight for a preliminary assessment of environmental conditions on and around the site covering about 25 acres. An Advisory Board was established to interface with the community. Ultimately, the site selected for redevelopment was the home for two former service stations. The most recent owner, Shell, was involved throughout the process.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

The local project coordinator recognized early in the process that the project would benefit from a facilitator. The community had high expectations for the project which needed to be managed effectively. Many community members entered the process with the expectation that any project agreed upon would provide long term jobs for community members. This created a problem of expectations since such guarantees could not be made.

This project involved the most deliberate approach to selecting and utilizing the facilitator of all the cases in this assessment. A formal procurement process was used to select the facilitator, who was chosen from 20 applicants. And the facilitator was involved throughout the entire project, from 1996 until April 2000.

The local project coordinator viewed the facilitator's work as crucial to the success of this project. The project moved from the planning to implementation phases during the course of the facilitator's involvement. And the outcomes from the project included cleaning the site, and establishing a foundation to oversee use of the site, recommended as a mixed use facility including affordable housing for seniors.

The project coordinator, however, perceived the outcomes as bittersweet for those who expected jobs for community members resulting from the process. Nonetheless, by nearly every other measure, the project was considered successful.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged early in the project

Primary Facilitator Roles: Facilitated the Advisory Group and mediated issues around expectations for jobs

Primary Process Characteristics: Community engagement; manage interface with technical consultants to select the site; help develop and implement plan for clean-up; develop redevelopment alternatives; and assist in reaching agreement on alternatives

Primary Challenges: Resolve issues emanating from community expectations about job acquisition

Primary Lessons Learned: Reinforces the value of having local leadership both support and clearly understand the value and roles of a facilitator; importance of stakeholders in accepting the facilitator

9. Pocatello, ID - Region 10

Background

Unlike many of the brownfields redevelopment projects assessed, which had considerable longevity, this project involved a one-day charrette. This provides an interesting alternative to the “typical” stakeholder process which relies on building relationships over time, with sufficient time to create and evaluate options. The charrette focused more on what the group could accomplish in a creative atmosphere in a short period of time. Some of the limitations of this approach were also realized, however.

Prior to the charrette, the City had identified a “Volkswagon graveyard” as the major focus of a proposed brownfields redevelopment project. The charrette was convened as a mechanism to provide public input into the process.

Facilitation Characteristics and Outcomes

A facilitator was selected by the City to manage public input to the brownfields redevelopment process. He planned and facilitated a one-day charrette. During the charrette, site selection criteria were developed and used to evaluate potential sites. The charrette encouraged participants to “think outside the box.”

The result of the charrette was identification of a second possible site for consideration. This was an old Kraft facility located on the river with great potential for economic development, close to other brownfields redevelopment sites as well as a major greenbelt. All these factors led participants to recommend redevelopment of this site rather than the original Volkswagon graveyard site.

Based on outcomes from the charrette, work began on developing a grant proposal to EPA to proceed with the redevelopment of the Kraft site. In the course of finalizing the grant proposal, however, local political leaders decided to terminate the project, based on the selection of the Kraft site which was not their preferred option.

This project demonstrated the potential limitations of using a short-term process on matters with significant economic and political implications. Creative solutions were developed and the perspectives of the public were successfully incorporated into recommended outcomes. But one critique of this process is that it did not allow the time or the process to sufficiently analyze the implications of proposed outcomes in light of the potential political and economic considerations. With a longer-term process, involving additional meetings with local leaders, more opportunities to integrate creative problem solving with political dynamics are possible. Under most circumstances this would increase the likelihood of

identifying and detailing implementable outcomes.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged during the course of the redevelopment project after a clear sense of how to proceed with public input was established

Primary Facilitator Roles: Plan and facilitate a one-day charrette

Primary Process Characteristics: Use of a charrette to create public input, working for creative solutions from a wide range of participants while looking for commonalities

Primary Challenges: Trying to manage and integrate a wide range of perspectives on possible solutions in a short time span

Primary Lessons Learned: Reinforces the critical importance of political dynamics in collaborative public policy processes and the need to account for political variables; reinforces the inherent tenets of collaborative processes that integrate political dynamics into outcomes (to the extent possible); it is important to match the process with the desired outcomes (e.g., the shorter charrette used for the Siletz tribe was successful but had different objectives, which were perhaps better suited to the short time span available).

10. Siletz, OR - Region 10

Background

This case involved the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz in Oregon. The Tribes were considering how to clean-up and reduce their liability for a mill site which had been acquired. As with the previous case, the process used was a charrette and the same facilitator was used. In the Siletz case, however, the process involved only a half-day charrette. Yet it was highly successful.

The results of the charrette were a clearer sense of direction for how the tribe should proceed with its redevelopment efforts, as well as the emergence of support and assistance from the state. Until this event, there was no external support being given the tribe and they were unclear about how best to proceed. The charrette opened the door for an action plan and governmental partnerships which moved the project forward.

Facilitation Characteristics

The facilitator received positive feedback on the design and outcomes of the process. Although only a half-day meeting, it brought people into the room

who had different pieces of information critical to moving forward yet who had never directly interacted. This speaks to the power of having the correct organizations participate in stakeholder processes, with the correct focus that allows the opportunity for relationship building and information sharing.

By using the half-day charrette format the key decision makers were persuaded to participate. In this case, the mere opportunity to interact and gain a better understanding of the project and its requirements was the keystone to success. For the issues encountered in this case, the design and level of participation served the project well.

This project built on the realities of the amount of time key participants could contribute with the existing level of knowledge and relationships. The design also incorporated a recognition of the need to create an environment that would open the door to improved communications and relationship building. The half-day charrette design was critical to success.

Summary

Initiation of Facilitation: Facilitator engaged during the course of the redevelopment project after a clear sense of how to proceed with public input was established

Primary Facilitator Roles: Plan and facilitate a one-half day charrette

Primary Process Characteristics: Use of a charrette to create opportunities for the Tribes to interact with agency leaders who could provide guidance on their project

Primary Challenges: Within a limited time span engage state agency officials with Tribal leaders in a manner that would enhance relationships and create opportunities for ongoing interaction

Primary Lessons Learned: Reinforces the need to match the process to the desired outcomes; reinforces the wide range of tools that can be used successfully, if properly supported and applied, in brownfields redevelopment.